A Gift of the Revd John Edwards of Bedford to the Revd Mr Wigglesworth

REMAINS

Of the late Reverend and Learned

John Edwards, *D. D.*

Sometime FELLOW of

St. *John's* College in *Cambridge.*

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Patrologia:

PATROLOGIA:

OR, A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

PRIMITIVE FATHERS and ANTIENT WRITERS

OF THE

Chriſtian Church.

Deſigned to undeceive Thoſe who have entertained wrong Apprehenſions concerning THEM and their WRITINGS.

LONDON:

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THE PREFACE.

I HAVE partly, and by the Bye, handled this Theme, concerning the *Fathers*, in a *Diſcourſe* of *Truth* and *Errour*, which I publiſhed ſome Years ago: Wherefore 'tis not improper to acquaint the Reader, by way of Introduction, what was and is the Occaſion of my *reſuming* this Subject, and preſenting him with *New* and *Freſh Remarks* upon it; that thereby he may be ſatisfied that this is no Impertinent and Frivolous Task, that I have now undertaken, but that he may be convinced of the *Reaſonableneſs* and *Importance*, yea, of the *Seaſonableneſs*, and even the *Neceſſity*, of this Performance. I muſt then let him know that I have obſerved of late, that 'tis grown, into a ſettled Opinion among ſome Perſons, that the Writings of the *An-*

tient Fathers are the *Great and Indubitable Teſt of Chriſtian Verities*, that we are indiſpenſably obliged to copy out theſe Originals, and that we ought with all Exactneſs to direct our *Opinions* and *Practices* according to this *Pattern*; and if we omit this, we are to be charged with *Innovation*, *Heterodoxy*, and *Irregularity*. Mr. *Dodwell* is very peremptory in aſſerting that * *the Firſt Ages are to be looked on as a Standard.*

But I can't aſſent to this; for I ſee plainly, that, by this means, the Antient Fathers of the Church are made Patrons of ſome of the moſt Unjuſtifiable Doctrines and Practices that prevail among us. Some of our Divines, in their late Diſcourſes and Writings, are pleaſed to thruſt upon us ſeveral Unſafe Tenets and Uſages, under the Pretence of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, and Conformity to the Writings of the *Antient Doctors of the Church*; and eſpecially they inſiſt on this, that † *the Fathers are of the greateſt Authority for deciding the true Senſe of Scripture*; that § *thoſe of the firſt Age knew Certainly and Infallibly the true Senſe of the Scripture*; that †† *the Catholick Writers of the firſt three or four Centuries, were much better appointed for*

* Of the Uſe of Incenſe.
† Dr. *Wells*'s Remarks on Dr. *Clarke*'s Introduction. *p.* 14.
§ *Idem*, *p.* 21.
†† M. *Reeve*'s Preface concerning the *Right Uſe of the Fathers*.

the

the Interpretation of the Goſpel, than any other diſtant Succeſſors. Yea, another tells us, ** that *that Man ought to ſuſpect his own Judgement and Orthodoxy, whoſe Opinions ſink below the Standard of the Second Age after Chriſt.* And he had ſaid before concerning one of the Antients, that *he knew the Mind of the Apoſtles much better than any that lived in After-ages, and infinitely beyond any of our Modern Divines, though they were able to underſtand all the Tongues of Men, and even of Angels.* This is High and Daring and like the Author. And this is generally the Sentiment of our Eccleſiaſticks. So that according to them we are abſolutely obliged, to take thoſe *Antients* for our Guides and Directors in our expounding the Scriptures, and likewiſe in all our Doctrines and Practices relating to the Chriſtian Religion, and to prefer the Writings of theſe Seniors to all thoſe of the Moderns.

To antidote againſt this falſe and miſchievous Notion, I deem it neceſſary, to ſet before the Reader the *Primitive Fathers* of the Church in a true and exact Light, to let him ſee, that though they were Excellent Perſons and famous in their Generations, though in ſeveral Reſpects they merit our Eſteem and Veneration, though their Teſtimonies are ſer-

** Mr. *Johnſon*'s unbloody Sacrifice.

viceable to confirm and eſtabliſh the Catholick Doctrines; yet they had their Infirmities as well as others; and that their Writings can't be a Standard and rule to us, becauſe they abound with ſundry Dangerous Opinions and Superſtitious Practices; and the Purity of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Simplicity of its Faith, Worſhip, and Manners are almoſt extinct in ſome of them. Even the Primitive Times were not free from undue Mixtures and Corruptions, cauſed by the Weakneſs of Mens Underſtandings, and by the wilful Attempts of Deſigning Men. We are told by **Euſebius*, from *Hegeſippus*, that the Church after the Death of the Apoſtles and Apoſtolick Men, *did not long continue a pure Virgin.* Even in thoſe early Times, the Chriſtian Religion began to be corrupted with Humane Fictions and Inventions, with unneceſſaryRites and Ceremonies. Some of the Chief Doctors of the Church exerciſed their Wits rather than their Judgements in their Expoſitions of Scripture, and they diluted the Word of God with their own weak Reaſonings. Therefore it it moſt ſtrange and prodigious, that any Perſons, who are acquainted with the Notions and Uſages maintained by the Primitive Writers, (as many of our Learned Divines are) ſhould ſtickle ſo fiercely for

* Hiſt. Eccleſ. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 32.

ſome

ſome of them, and be ſo *exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of* theſe *Fathers.*

Look where you will, and you will find no Satisfaction in the Writings of theſe Men. The Beginning and the Period of the *Seventy Weeks* in *Daniel* are differently determined by *Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Julius Africanus, Theodoret, Chryſoſtom, Sulpitius Severus, Bede*; ſo that we can depend on none of them: That the Books of the Old Teſtament were burnt and loſt in the time of the *Babylonian* Captivity, and were dictated all a-new by Divine Revelation to *Ezra*, is aſſerted by * *Clemens Alexandrinus Baſil*, and *Theodoret*. But other Fathers, as † *Irenæus*, § *Tertullian*, ** *Jerom*, †† *Auguſtine*, and divers others were of a contrary Opinion, namely, that thoſe Sacred Volumes were not loſt or embezzled, but only collected, reviſed, and put into good Order by that Holy Man, or by ſome other Religious *Jews*.

Concerning the *Hebrew* Text of the Old Teſtament, ſome of the Fathers held, that it is Corrupted. *Juſtin Martyr* in his *Dialogues* with *Tryphon* is peremptory, that the *Jews* eraſed ſeveral Paſſages out of the Old Teſtament, and he inſtances in particular

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* Strom. 1. † Adv. Hæreſ. *l.* 3. § De hab. mulier. *cap.* 3.
** Contr. Helv. †† De Mirac. S. Scriptur. *lib.* 2.

Places in the *Pſalms* and in *Iſaiah*. *Jerom* is ſometimes inclined to believe that the *Hebrew* Text is depraved. Other Fathers, as *Tertullian*, *Irenæus*, *Origen*, hold the contrary; and even *Jerom* himſelf, in his Commentary on 8 *Zech.* and in his 102d Epiſtle to *Marcus*, he ſtands up for the Authority of the *Hebrew* Text. Though they acknowledge that the *Jews* corrupted the *Senſe* of ſeveral Texts, yet they are not perſuaded that they altered the Words: And St. *Auguſtine* expreſsly maintains, in his Book of the *City of God*, that they were not guilty of this; and in another Place he affirms, that they were * Faithful Keepers and Preſervers of the Old Teſtament for us Chriſtians.

I might obſerve, how little Streſs is to be laid on the *Interpretations of Scripture* which are given by the *Fathers*. To inſtance in two or three only at preſent: 'Tis ſtrange to ſee what Diverſity of Notions they entertain about *Gen.* ii. 8. iii. 23. which mentions the *Garden of Eden* (or the *Paradiſe of Eden* according to the *Septuagint*) which *Adam* and *Eve* were bleſſed with in the time of their Innocence. Though ſome of them own it to be a Place of Delight and Pleaſure here on Earth, yet others will not allow it to be a

* Quid eſt aliud gens ipſa niſi quædam Scriniaria Chriſtianorum bajulans Legem & Prophetas. *Cont. Fauſt. l.* 12. *c.* 13.

Place,

Place, but a *State of Bleſſedneſs*; of which Opinion was *Origen*, *Baſil*, and ſometimes *Jerom.* But *Auguſtin*, *Epiphanius*, *Ephraim Syrus* have other Conceptions about it. Some place it in Heaven, and not on the Earth; and ſome take it only in an Allegorical and Myſtical Senſe: Others both in an Allegorical and a Literal or Real Senſe. According to ſome of the Fathers, *Enoch* and *Elias*, who are now in Paradiſe, ſhall return thence, and appear on the Earth towards the End of the World, and ſhall ſubdue Antichriſt, who, they ſay, ſhall be of the Tribe of *Dan*, and ſhall reign three Years and ſix Months. Some or all of theſe Opinions were held by *Juſtin Martyr*, in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, *Tertullian de Anima*, *Cyril of Jeruſalem*, *Catech.* 11. *Athanaſius Queſt.* 108. *ad Antolych.* *Theodoret Queſt.* 3. *in Numer.* *Chryſoſtom Hom.* 7. *in Matth.* though there was no ſolid Ground for ſuch Notions.

The 5th Verſe of the firſt Pſalm, where 'tis ſaid, that *the Ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the Judgement*, was quoted by *Clemens Alexand. Strom. l.* 2, by *Cyprian ad Quirin. l.* 3. *Lactantius Inſtitut. l.* 7. and by *Theodoret in Pſal.* 1. to prove the Judgement of the laſt Day ſhall not be Univerſal; for the Ungodly are condemned in this Life, and there is no Neceſſity of their appearing at the laſt Day.

The

The Meaning of the 92d *Pſalm*, verſe 12. where it is ſaid that *the Righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree*, is groſsly miſtaken by ſome of the Antients; who, becauſe Φοίνιξ ſignifies both the *ſuppoſed Bird* of that Name, and alſo the *Palm-tree*, they interpreted it of the former; for the Fable of the Phœnix was generally believed by the Fathers, and was made by them an Argument of the Reſurrection. See this in *Tertullian de Reſur. carnis*, *cap.* 13. *Epiphanius in Ancorato*, *Cyril of Jeruſ. Cat* 18. *Ambroſe*, and ſeveral others.

Some Texts are interpreted purely to avoid the interpreting of the Hereticks; as 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. where according to the *Ebionites*, *the God of this World* is the *Devil*; wherefore, on the contrary, it is applied to the *True God* by *Irenæus*, *Hilary*, *Theodoret*, *Chryſoſtom.*

The Fathers cannot agree in giving the Meaning of *Mark* xiii. 32. *Of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* *Origen* aſſigns one Meaning, *Theodoret* another, *Epiphanius* a third, *Cyrill* a fourth, *Jerom* a fifth, *Ambroſe* a ſixth, *Athanaſius* a ſeventh; and all of their Interpretations are extravagant but the Laſt.

In the ſixth Chapter of St. *John*'s Goſpel, Chriſt, by *Eating his Fleſh, and Drinking his*

his Blood, means the Sacrament of the *Euchariſt*, ſay the *Roman* Doctors, and they quote the Antient Writers of the Church for it; as *Clement* of *Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Athanaſius*, *Jerom*, and others. But Proteſtant Writers either condemn the Interpretation of theſe Fathers, or labour to prove that they do not interpret that Chapter of the *Euchariſt*. And why? becauſe other Fathers, as *Theodoret*, *Auguſtin*, *Chryſoſtom*, &c. affirm, that the *Eating* and *Drinking* above-mentioned are to be underſtood concerning the ſpiritual Eating and Drinking of Chriſt by Faith. So uncertain is the Senſe of the Fathers.

Not but that we ought to diſlike and explode what a late Writer hath done, in his *Diſſertation concerning the Interpretation of the Scriptures*, &c. where he finds Fault with, and rejects the *Interpretations of the Fathers*, even when they are Sound and Orthodox; as in theſe following Texts, *Gen.* i. 26. *Let us make Man after our Image.* Job xiv. 1. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* Pſal. ii. 7. *Thou art my Son: this Day have I begotten thee.* Prov. viii. 23. *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the Beginning of his way*, &c. Iſai. liii. 8. *Who ſhall declare his Generation?* Iſai. lxiii. 1. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed Garments from Bozrah?* John v. 23:

That

That they may honour the Son even as they honour the Father. John ix. 2. *Who did ſin, this Man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* John xii. 26. *I and my Father are one.* John xiv. 28. *My Father is greater than I.* Col. i. 23. *If ye continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled, and be not moved away,* &c. The Dr. diſlikes the Interpretations which the Fathers give of theſe Texts, becauſe they are repugnant to his own heterodox Opinions.

And at other times he groſsly miſtakes the Senſe of the Fathers, and wreſts their Words, becauſe he hath no other way of evading them. Inſtances of this are, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 18. *When the Righteous turneth from his Righteouſneſs,* &c. Rom. v. 12. *In whom all have ſinned.* Ver. 19. *As by one Man's Diſobedience many were made Sinners,* &c. Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate.* Rom ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth.* 1 Cor. viii. 6. *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things,* &c. Eph. ii. 3. *We were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others.* All which Texts, and the Fathers expreſs Comments upon them, are miſrepreſented by this Author, in Favour of *Arians,* (ſome of whoſe Notions he hath adopted) and of *Remonſtrants.*

There

There are others that have ſhewed themſelves great Enemies to the Fathers, and none more openly and profeſſedly than Mr. *Le Clerc*, who ſeems to take delight in inſulting thoſe antient Writers, which he doth to a very bad Purpoſe; namely, to unſettle and weaken ſome Points of the Chriſtian Religion, and even to ſhake Chriſtianity itſelf.

But though this groſs Abuſing of the Fathers be unſufferable, yet we may lawfully cenſure them when they juſtly deſerve this Treatment from us; as they too often do, becauſe their Expoſitions and Comments on ſeveral Places of Scripture are unſafe and erroneous, and argue their Want of Skill and Knowledge in thoſe Matters which they undertake to expound.

Yea, as to theſe Matters, which the antient Writers of the Church might be thought to be very well skilled in, and had an Opportunity, on ſome Accounts, to ſearch into, and to know better than thoſe who lived afterwards, I ſhall ſhew that they were defective in their Knowledge even of *them*. And more generally, I will make it evident, that nothing belonging either to *Doctrine* or *Worſhip*, to *Diſcipline*, or to our *Practice* in the Church, can be eſtabliſhed on the Credit and Authority of the Firſt Writers of the Church; and that we may become better and abler Chriſtians, by conſulting the Writings of the Moderns,

Moderns, than by acquainting ourſelves with thoſe of the Antients. This, I know, will be an ungrateful Theme to many Readers; but I could not wave it, becauſe I am a ſworn Lover and Friend of *Truth*, and have vowed to ſerve her at all times.

And, more particularly, I deſign this as a Preparative to what I am afterwards to offer to the Publick, in Confutation of the *whole Body of Popery*: For the *Roman* Doctors are wont to make the *Writings of the Fathers* their great Foundation. * *If we appeal to them*, ſaith one of the moſt conſiderable Men among the *Romaniſts*, *the Controverſy is at an end, the Buſineſs is done.* And it was ingenuouſly confeſſed by *Eckius*, a Popiſh Doctor, to the Elector of *Bavaria*, that † the Doctrine which *Luther* and the *Proteſtants* taught, might be confuted out of the Writings of the Fathers, but not by the Scriptures. *Valeſius*, before his Edition of *Euſebius*'s *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, hath theſe remarkable Words, *Ad convincendos Hæreticos nihil meo quidem judicio efficacius eſt atque potentius quam hoc genus Scriptionis.* There is (ſaith he) in my Judgement, nothing more efficacious and powerful for convincing

* *Ad Patres ſi quando licebit accedere, confectum eſt Prælium.* Campian. Rat. I.

† Colloq. Menſal.

of

of Hereticks, than this Sort of Writing, which preſents us with the Authority of the *Fathers*, and the Traditions of the *Antients*. It is no Wonder therefore, that the Church of *Rome* makes its Appeal ſo ſtrenuouſly to theſe.

And this ſome of our Divines do at this Day, when they are reviving ſome of the Popiſh Tenets and Practices; namely, *Proper Prieſthood, Proper Sacrifices, and Altars*, the *Abſolute Neceſſity of Prieſtly Abſolution, Praying for the Dead*, and *Praying to them, Anointings*, &c. It is alledged by thoſe Men, that the *Antient Fathers* of the Church approved of all theſe, and that they derive them from Antient Monuments; and therefore we are to do ſo too; for they living at the Spring-head, we can expect nothing but pure Streams flowing from thence, and conveyed to us by thoſe Writers. Thus we are bubbled into *Popery*, under Pretence of following the Example of the primitive Saints, and the Directions of the Holy Writers of the Firſt Ages. By this plauſible Artifice, Dr. *Hickes* hath done his Endeavour, before he went out of the World, to introduce ſome Part of *Popery* into this Part of it. This is the *Trojan* Horſe that was expecting Admittance, and he and ſome other *Prieſts*, like *Sinon* of old, were courting us to receive it within our Walls, and were haling it in with their own Hands:

Hands: So that if their Efforts ſhall prove ſucceſsful, the Name of *Proteſtant* will, in a ſhort time, be contemptible, yea, odious and ſcandalous.

And this is endeavoured to be effected, by crying up the Authority of the *Fathers* and *Antiquity*: Charming Words! Such as work Wonders, and are more powerful than the ſtrongeſt Reaſon, and the cleareſt Revelation. It is time for us therefore to guard ourſelves againſt theſe Charms and Faſcinations, by being very cautious and wary, when we read the Antient Writers of the Church, leſt we be unawares wheedled into Falſehood and Errours, eſpecially thoſe which the *Church of Rome* is infamous for. Seeing then I have purpoſed, through the divine Aſſiſtance, to attack and encounter *theſe*, I cannot come at the Enemy, and expect a ſucceſsful Combat, 'till I have firſt made my way through the *Fathers*. This is like *gaining a Paſs*. Wherefore I hope the Neceſſity of this firſt Onſet will be my Excuſe, if I fall upon them with ſome Freedom and Earneſtneſs. I ſhall not be troubled at what prejudiced Perſons ſhall ſuggeſt: But if any of them ſhall pleaſe to try their Skill in confuting what I ſay, I ſhall thereby have Occaſion to ſay *More*, yea, *much more* than I have already offered in theſe Papers.

After

After all, let us not forget to *imitate* the *Primitive Chriſtians*, and more eſpecially the *Pious Fathers*, in thoſe Things that juſtly and unqueſtionably deſerve our Imitation; and thoſe are not a few. And as for their Writings, I would not have it imagined, that any thing which I ſuggeſt in the following Diſcourſe, is deſigned to diſcourage Perſons from reading and ſtudying thoſe Antient Records, but only to caution them to do it with Prudence and Care; for it is my Opinion, that moſt of the Diſorders in the Church ariſe from the *Ill Uſe* of thoſe Writings. But it is certain, there is a very *Good Uſe* to be made of them, and particularly they may be ſerviceable againſt our Adverſaries who cite them, and lay great Streſs upon them; for then it will be proper to combat them, yea, and to vanquiſh them, with their own Weapons. Their Teſtimony may fitly be made uſe of, to confront thoſe who quote them to maintain ill Notions or Practices: And ſo I have alledged them in my Diſcourſes about the *Sacred Trinity*, and about the *Anti-Remonſtrant Doctrines*. When any Writers pervert the Senſe and Meaning of the Fathers, we are to correct the miſtaken Quotations, and to ſhew that thoſe antient and venerable Doctors aſſert and confirm thoſe very Truths which we defend. This is a proper and ſeaſonable Occaſion to make

uſe of them. And upon other Accounts we ſometimes ſtand in need of them, and muſt be forced to own that they are of great Benefit and Advantage to us, and that their Writings are very worthy of our diligent Peruſal, as I ſhall immediately ſhew in the following Papers; having firſt told the Reader, that in all my References and Quotations, I have had immediate Recourſe to thoſe Antient Writers themſelves, and not contented myſelf with peruſing what others have cited out of them.

A BRIEF DISCOURSE Concerning the *FATHERS* AND *Antient Writers* OF THE CHURCH.

CHAP. I.

AN *Accompliſhed Divine* ſhould be skilled in all Sorts of Erudition and Literature, eſpecially that which looks towards the Church; and therefore it is neceſſary, he ſhould be well acquainted with the Writings of the *Fathers*, and *Antient Doctors* of the Chriſtian Church. Theſe are well worth his diligent peruſing, becauſe of the *Hiſtory*

of thoſe Times contained in them; becauſe of the *Relations of Fact* which are there regiſtered; becauſe of the *Opinions* and *Sentiments* then prevailing amongſt Chriſtians, and the contrary *Errours* and *Hereſies* there recorded; becauſe of the excellent *Morals* and *Rules of Life* contained in thoſe Writings; becauſe of the noble Flights of *Devotion* there to be found; becauſe of theſe Writers uſeful Comments and *Gloſſes* on ſeveral Places of Scripture; becauſe of their *Conſent* and *Suffrage* about ſundry Articles of Religion; becauſe of their *Place* and *Dignity* in the Church, as ſome of them were Biſhops and Publick Inſtructors and Paſtors; becauſe of their ſtrenuous aſſerting the Chriſtian Faith againſt *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and *Hereticks*; laſtly, even becauſe of the good *Greek* and *Latin* in ſome of theſe Authors, which cannot but be acceptable to the Skilful in thoſe Languages: In all theſe Reſpects, and on theſe ſeveral Conſiderations, the Moderns may receive great Advantage from the Writings of the Antients.

And if we ſpeak of Particular Perſons, we can't but take notice of their Peculiar and Proper Excellencies. To paſs by *Clement*, *Hermes*, *Dionyſius the Areopagite*, *Barnabas*, *Polycarp*, and even *Ignatius*, whoſe Epiſtles are confeſſed to be interpolated and corrupted, the firſt eminent Writers were theſe that follow.

Juſtin Martyr, who was a good Hiſtorian, and no leſs skilled in Philoſophy both Natural and Moral; he had diligently read the Scriptures, as appears from his frequent quoting them.

Irenæus was a Man of Univerſal Knowledge; he had ſtudied the Writings of the Antients, and more particularly of *Plato*; he was alſo well acquainted with the Opinions of the Hereticks.

Clement of Alexandria was well verſed in the Poetry and Philoſophy of the Antients; he hath learnedly

learnedly baffled the Pagan Worſhip, and admirably diſplayed the Moral Part of Religion.

Tertullian is eminent for the Sharpneſs of his Wit, and the Warmth and Zeal he expreſſes in his Defence of the Chriſtian Inſtitution.

Minutius Felix is admired for his elegant and proper ſtile, and his ſmart Expoſing of the wild Opinions and Practices of the Heathens.

Origen was the learnedeſt of all the *Greek* Fathers, and his Induſtry and Study were anſwerable to his extraordinary Parts and Invention.

Cyprian was the moſt Eloquent of all the *Latin* Fathers; and he is famed for his exact Rules of Diſcipline and Morality.

Arnobius ſolidly confutes the Ridiculouſneſs and Abſurdities of the Heathen Religion, and maintains the Credit and Repute, not only of Chriſtianity, but of the Profeſſors of it.

Lactantius is juſtly celebrated for the Purity and Exactneſs of his Language, as well as the Excellent Matters he hath made choice of to embelliſh with the Ornaments of his Stile.

Euſebius Biſhop of *Cæſarea* hath rendered his Name and Memory immortal, by his Books of Hiſtory and Chronology, of Evangelical Preparation and Demonſtration.

Athanaſius's Writings will ever be in eſteem, as they are the beſt Antidote againſt the Poyſon of *Arianiſm.*

Hilary will be valued for the like Reaſon, and for the pious Vehemency and matchleſs Freedom of his Pen.

Optatus ſhews his Wit and Learning, as well as his Zeal againſt Schiſm.

Cyril of Jeruſalem is approved of for the Plainneſs and Simplicity both of his Matter and Stile.

Baſil the Great excells even the beſt *Greek* Rhetoricians; he is clear, pure, unaffected, yet ſublime and lofty, and every where learned:

He ſhews himſelf a Divine, Philoſopher, and Orator.

Gregory Nazianzen was an other Writer that was celebrated for his Rhetorick, and no leſs for Theological Acquirements, with reſpect to which latter he gained the Name of *the Divine*.

Gregory Nyſſen was a very Florid Speaker, and had a good Gift in Allegorizing, and giving Myſtical Reaſons of things.

Ambroſe is Grave and Serious, and noted for his conſtant Strain of Piety.

Chryſoſtom, or *John of Conſtantinople*, (as St. *Jerom*, St. *Auguſtine* and *Theodoret* always call him, and none of the Antients call him by any other Name) is applauded by all Readers for his Eaſy and Flowing Stile, his natural and unaffected Elocution, and his excellent Art of applying himſelf agreeably to his Auditors.

Jerom was the Learnedeſt of all the *Latin* Fathers; his Writings are fraught with all Sorts of Learning, and he artfully, as it were, forces us to attend to what he ſaith.

Auguſtine is admired by all Men for his Great Reach in all Theological Points and Controverſies, for his Ardour in Devotion, and for the Practical Part of Religion, which he hath cultivated.

Thus theſe Great Men were, in their ſeveral Ways, uſeful to the Church of Chriſt. And there are others, as *Cyril of Alexandria*, *Baſil of Seleucia*, *Novatian*, *Theophilus Antiochenus*, *Ruffinus*, *Africanus*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Iſidorus Peluſiota*, *Gaudentius*, *Fulgentius*, *Proſper*, *Salvian*, *Caſſian*, *Iſidorus Hiſpalenſis*, *Sulpitius Severus*, *Macarius*, *Occumenius*, *Theophylact*, *Bede*, who juſtly merit Reſpect and Honour from us.

But then we are to remember and conſider, that a great many of the Writings and Diſcourſes, which go under the Names of the *Fathers*, are in whole or in part Spurious and Suppoſititious, as hath been

been acknowledged and proved by ſeveral of the moſt ſagacious * Writers. A Great Man and neighbouring Prelate hath told us, that, " The " Writings of the Fathers have been ſo corrupted " by the Intermixture of Hereticks, ſo many Falſe " Books put forth in their Names, ſo many of " their Writings loſt which would more clearly " have explicated their Senſe, and at laſt an open " Profeſſion made, and a Trade of making the " Fathers ſpeak, not what themſelves thought, but " what other Men pleaſed, that it is a great In- " ſtance of God's Providence and Care of his " Church, that we have ſo much Good preſerved " in the Writings which we received from the " Fathers, and that all Truth is not as clear gone, " as is the Certainty of their great Authority and " Reputation". Thus Biſhop *Taylor Lib.* of Proph.

And indeed we can't boaſt of their Authority and Reputation, when we remember that theſe Writers oftentimes mingle Philoſophy and humane Reaſonings with the Holy Scripture: At other times they ſpeak only according to Common Opinion, and the Senſe of the Vulgar: Sometimes they ſay thoſe things in the Heat of Diſpute, which they retract at another time. They expreſs ſome things merely in a Rhetorical and Flouriſhing way. St. *Jerom*, though (as was ſaid before) he was the Learnedeſt of all the *Latin* Fathers, yet was not exact in any of the Doctrines he had occaſion to diſcourſe of. He confeſſes that his Commentaries are taken out of other Men's Writings, and from what he had learned of the *Jews*, whoſe Writings are ſtuffed with fabulous Traditions, and he doth not offer them as his own Sentiments; ſo that the Reader cannot know from him either

* *Baronius, Trithemius, Morellius, Poſſevinus, Eraſmus, Pamelius, Caſſiodorus, Sylburgius, Fronto Ducæus, James, Cook, Perkins, Caſaubon, Voſſius, Du Pin*, &c.

his own Senſe, or that of the Text itſelf, which is commented upon. And as for the Expoſitions of ſome of the other Fathers, they are ſeldom to be relied upon; becauſe they keep up different Interpretations, which cannot all be True, yea, which apparently contradict one another. Sometimes they have Fanciful Expoſitions of the Sacred Text; ſometimes they are Ludicrous and Trifling, very Comical and whimſical; their Gravities condeſcend to play and jeſt in a ſerious Matter; they write as if they had deſigned only to find Diverſion for the Reader.

We are not ſafe when we ſtudy the Fathers, unleſs we be upon our Guard, and reſolve not to rely upon their Determinations by an implicit Belief; becauſe many of them deal in far-fetched Arguments, in Allegories and Alluſions, which are not concluſive; and ſometimes they deliver Things in way of Conjecture only. Every one that hath read them knows, that they often ſpeak ambiguouſly, ſo that we cannot eaſily reach their true Meaning.

And having mentioned their *Ambiguous* Speaking, I cannot but remind the Reader of this conſiderable Thing; namely, that the Primitive Writers generally affected *Obſcurity* in their Stile, and even ſtudied to be *Dark* and *Myſterious*: And the Reaſon was, becauſe they loved to conceal the Myſteries of Chriſtianity, and to hide them from the Knowledge of the Publick. The very *Catechumens* were not acquainted with the Apoſtle's Creed, or any other Creed, 'till their actual Admiſſion into Baptiſm; as we learn from *Rufinus*, *Jerom*, *Ambroſe*, *Fulgentius*, and others. And even afterwards, when Converts were paſt the Diſcipline of the *Catechumens*, the Eccleſiaſtical Guides were not very forward to inſtruct them about the Abſtruſe Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, but rather choſe to let them remain Secrets for a conſiderable time,

* *Origen*

* *Origen*, † *Baſil*, § *Chryſoſtom*, intimate that there are Myſteries in the Scripture which ought not to be explained, but to be kept in the dark. The like is evident from ſeveral Paſſages in *Clement of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*. This gives ſome account of the Difficulty of underſtanding ſome Paſſages in the Writings of the Fathers; for though they could, yet they would not explain and lay open ſome *Secrets of their holy Faith*. They thought it unlawful to diſcover and divulge theſe, and ſome of the *Sacred Rites* of the Chriſtians. So that upon this and other Accounts, it may be reckoned as one of the moſt arduous Things in the Compaſs of Learning, to make Improvement in our Studies by reading theſe Firſt Writers of the Chriſtian Church. There are many Divines and others that have peruſed them, but there are but few, very few, who know how to make a right Uſe of them. The Reaſon is, becauſe every one is not fit to read the Fathers: He that enters on this Work muſt be prepared beforehand; he muſt well underſtand the Tongue they write in, the Time when they flouriſhed and wrote, the State of the Chriſtian Church at that Seaſon, the particular Genius and Diſpoſition of their Perſons, the Occaſion of their Writing, the Controverſies then on foot. Nor is this enough, he muſt lay aſide all Prepoſſeſſions and Prejudices; for it requires great Integrity, Faithfulneſs, and Impartiality to make uſe of theſe Writings, and apply them as we ſhould.

After all, there is this one Thing that is abſolutely neceſſary towards making a right Uſe of the Fathers, namely, that we do not *overvalue* them or their Writings, as is a Common Fault, and never more than of late among ſome Men. It is their trite and uſual Plea in behalf of theſe Writers, and o.

* Homil. 5. in Numer. † De Spir. Sancto, *cap.* 27.
§ Homil. 14. in Matth.

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the Primitive Chriſtians in general, that they were very *Knowing* Perſons in Matters of Religion, and that their *Nearneſs* to the Times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles contributed very much to this; alſo, that they were Men of *Extraordinary Piety* and *Holineſs*, which fitted them, above other Perſons, to receive the Truth: And on both theſe Accounts they derived on themſelves the Bleſſing of Heaven. Likewiſe it is ſaid with great Aſſurance that their Writings are of very great Uſe, yea of abſolute Neceſſity to inſtruct us concerning the *Rites* and *Uſages* in the Church with relation to *Worſhip* and *Diſcipline*, and concerning all Doctrines that are neceſſary to be known, and all Practices that are to be imitated by us. And laſtly, it is ſuggeſted, that we learn from theſe antient Records how *Uniform* the firſt Churches were in their *Obſervation of thoſe Rites*, and how *Conſiſtent* and *Harmonious* they were in every Thing elſe. In all which reſpects thoſe Writings, we are told, are to be exceedingly reverenced and eſteemed by us, and are to be the Standard of Doctrine and Practice in all Chriſtian Churches.

But I will ſatisfy the Reader, who is impartial and judicious, that there is little of Truth and Weight in theſe Suggeſtions: For 1ſt, I will prove that thoſe Primitive Writers were defective in their *Knowledge*; they underſtood but little of the Religion which they profeſſed. 2dly, That they were culpable in their *Lives*, as well as other Chriſtians that ſucceeded them; they indulged themſelves in very ſcandalous Practices, and ſometimes the Lives of thoſe who profeſſed Chriſtianity, could ſcarcely be diſcerned from thoſe of Heathens. 3dly, That their Writings are ſtuffed with the Relation of *Needleſs Rites* and *Idle Ceremonies*, ſuch as are of no Uſe to Sober Chriſtians, and to ſuch as are Lovers of Solid Piety. 4thly, That there was no *Agreement* or *Uniformity* amongſt the Antients about theſe *Uſages* in the Churches, nor about

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ſeveral *other* important Matters relating to the Church and Religion, to Doctrines, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and Government in the Church. When I have done this, I will ſhew, 5thly, How the Exceſſive Admirers of the Writings and Uſages of the Antients *confute themſelves.* After that, 6thly, I will let the Reader ſee the Inevitable *Danger* which attends the exorbitant Eſteem that is paid by ſome to thoſe Writings. To which I will annex, 7thly, The *Remedy* that is to be made uſe of for the obviating that Danger and Miſchief: And, laſtly, I will cloſe all with a Reply to an *Objection*, which may ſeem to impair the Credit of what I have endeavoured to advance in ſeveral of the Particulars before-mentioned.

CHAP II.

I. THE Primitive Writers had attained but to a *mean Knowledge* of Matters relating to our Saviour, the Author and Founder of the Chriſtian Religion: They were miſtaken as to the *Hiſtorical* and the *Doctrinal* part of it: They did not agree about the exact Time of his Nativity: He was born two Years before the *Vulgar* or *Dionyſian* Æra, according to *Euſebius* and *Epiphanius*; three Years before it, ſay *Clement of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, *Jerom*, *Chryſoſtom*; four Years before this Epocha, ſay *Sulpitius Severus*, *Cedrenus*, *Nicephorus*, *Calliſtus*. And as they differed about the Year of our Saviour's Birth, ſo they knew not the Seaſon of the Year when he was born; that is, they agreed not about the Month. *Clement* before-mentioned informs us, in the firſt Book of his *Stromata*, that this was not determined by the Chriſtian Churches in his days; but he ſaith ſome Perſons made bold to aſſert that Chriſt was born in *April* or *May*, and ſome par-

particularly aſſigned the 20th day of *May* for it. In the *Roman* Churches Chriſt's Nativity was celebrated on the 25th of *December*. But in the *Greek* Churches it was variouſly kept, but generally on the 6th of *January*; 'till at laſt the *Greek* Churches complied with the *Roman* ones, and obſerved it on the 25th of *December*. They came not to this Agreement 'till *Chryſoſtom*'s Time, that is, the End of the fourth Century, as he himſelf tells us in his Homily on that day. The *Egyptian* and *Ethiopian* Chriſtians held, that Chriſt's Birth was on the 6th of *January*, as we are told by *Epiphanius* (*Hær.* 51.) and *Caſſianus*. (*Collat.* 10.) The Opinion of ſome of the Antients was, that our Saviour was born in *September*.

Other Inſtances might be brought to ſhew, that They were ignorant of what was done even in the *Times that were Near to them*. * *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that our Saviour preached but one Year upon the Earth: So ſaith † *Lactantius*. And before him *Origen* (*Homil.* 32. *on Luke*) ſaith, this was the common Opinion in his time; and it was his own, that the Time of Chriſt's Preaching after his Baptiſm was about one Year and a few Months. *Philocal.* p. 4. On the other hand, we are told by § *Irenæus*, that our Saviour lived about fifty Years, and preached near twenty of them. This Antient Writer had this Relation, he ſaith, from the Preſbyters of *Aſia*, and they had it from St. *John* himſelf, and from other Apoſtles. Chriſt lived but thirty Years, ſay *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Strom. l. 1. and *Tertullian contra Judæos*, cap. 5.

The Tradition concerning the *Millennium*, that is, the Perſonal Reigning of Chriſt upon Earth a thouſand Years in great Pomp and Grandour, with the Fruition of all Senſual Pleaſures, was derived from

* Strom. *lib.* 1. † Inſtitut. *lib.* 4. *c.* 10.
§ Adv. Hæreſ. *l.* 2. *c.* 39. 40.

St.

St. *John*, if we will believe *Papias*, one of the Antients, a Diſciple of St. *John* the Evangeliſt. And becauſe this Opinion was grounded on ſuch Authority, it became the general and univerſal Belief of the Chriſtians that came afterwards, yea, of the moſt Eminent of the Fathers. And yet this *Papias*, who was their greateſt Informer, was * *one of very little Underſtanding and Judgement*, as the famous Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian characterizes him; which the Learned † Dr. *Cave* interprets concerning that *Papias's Weakneſs* and *Undiſcerningneſs about the Chriſtian Doctrines*; *which* (ſaith he) *eaſily betrayed him, and others that followed him, into great Errours and Miſtakes.* However, we ſee from this Inſtance of *Papias*, that it is not *living near the Apoſtles Times*, no nor *converſing with ſome of them* that we can rely upon.

The Combats between St. *Peter* and *Simon the Sorcerer*, with the Defeat of the latter, are mentioned by *Arnobius*, *Cyril of Jeruſalem*, *Ambroſe*, *Sulpitius Severus*; but, beſides that theſe Writers do not agree in ſome of the Particulars of the Relation, other Credible Authors who had occaſion to ſpeak of this thing (if there had been any ſuch) ſay nothing at all of it, neither *Irenæus*, nor *Juſtin Martyr*, nor *Tertullian*, who wrote before the above-named Writers, nor *Euſebius* in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory take any notice of it.

When the *Gnoſticks* had their firſt Riſe, we cannot be reſolved from the Writings of the Antients: Some ſay they began in the Times of the Apoſtles: So *Chryſoſtom*, Homil. 18. on 1 *Tim.* vi. 20, and *Theodoret* on the ſame Place, they both aſſert that the Apoſtle's Ψευδώνυμος γνώσις refers to the *Gnoſticks*. But theſe Hereticks had their Original from *Carpocrates*, ſaith *Epiphanius*, Hæreſ. 27. *Menander* was

* Σφόδρα σμικρὸς καὶ τὸν νοῦν. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 3. *c.* 36.
† In the Life of *Irenæus*.

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the Father of them, ſaith *Irenæus*, Lib. 3. cap. 4. They ſprang from the *Nicolaites*, according to *Philaſtrius*, Hereſ. 33. *Tertullian*, *Euſebius*, and *Auguſtine* ſeem to differ in this Matter.

That certainly is a great Miſtake, which *Epiphanius*, (*De Ponderib. & Menſur.*) an other of the Antients, was guilty of, *viz.* that the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which our Saviour foretold, was not 'till ſixty five Years after his Paſſion. The ſame Writer tells us, that the Viſions in the *Apocalypſe* were delivered to St. *John* in the Emperor *Claudius*'s time, *Hæreſ.* 51. But *Origen* is quoted by *Euſebius*, Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 3. to prove that St. *John* received the *Revelation* Πρὸς τῷ τέλει Δομετιανῆ ἀρχῆς; *at the End of* Domitian's *Reign*, which was about fifty Years after the other Computation.

Juſtin Martyr, in his ſecond Apology, ſaith, that *Herod* reigned in *Judea* at the time when *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* ordered the Old Teſtament to be tranſlated into *Greek*.

The famous *Euſebius* Biſhop of *Ceſarea*, was one of the vaſteſt Readers of all the *Greek* Fathers; yet he hath a great many Slips in Chronology and Hiſtory, though relating to the Times not far off of him, as the learnedeſt Criticks, both of the Church of *Rome* and of the Proteſtant Communion, have obſerved *.

Epiphanius affirms, that *Arius*'s Hereſy was condemned in the *Nicene* Council after his Death, whence it may well be inferred that he was not at the Council; and beſides, if he had been there, he would not have been ſilent: But † *Gelaſius* and other Writers tell us, that he was preſent at the Council; and § *Socrates* and || *Rufinus* ſay, that he was alive even 'till the laſt Year of *Conſtantine the Great*.

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* Hæreſ. Melet. † Hæreſ. adv. Lucif. § Hiſt. Eccl. *Lib.* 1. *cap.* 25. || *Lib.* 1. *cap.* 13.

Sulpitius

Sulpitius Severus, in his Sacred Hiſtory, (which is very polite and elegant) abounds with many Miſtakes and Falſities, about Matter of Fact in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs.

It is no Wonder therefore, that Mr. *Dodwell*, in one of his Letters to the Biſhop of *Sarum*, expreſsly owns, that the *Fathers were of too eaſy Belief of Matter of Fact.* Whereupon the Writer of the *Memoirs of Literature*, adds this preſently; * *Since Mr.* Dodwell *affirms that ſeveral of the Fathers were too credulous, one may very well believe it.*

Damaſcen believed, that the Emperor *Trajan* was delivered from the Infernal Torments by the Prayers of St. *Gregory*, and *Falconilla* was ſet free from thoſe Pains, by the devout Addreſſes of an other. Thus we ſee, (and in other Particulars it might be obſerved) that the Firſt Writers of the Church deliver Things very precariouſly and arbitrarily: Many of them groſsly fail in their Relations of Matters that are eaſily knowable: Some of them did not rightly inform themſelves about thoſe Affairs, which either happened in their own Time, or very near to it. The firſt Author or Authors of the *Nicolaitan* Hereſy, and the lewd Practices of thoſe Hereticks, are not ſufficiently diſcovered by the Antient Writers: They do not ſatisfy us, whether the *Nicolaitans* took their Name from one of the Seven Deacons, or from an other *Nicolas*. And thoſe that are of Opinion that they had their Denomination from the Deacon, agree not whether he himſelf was the Author of thoſe lewd Errours and Practices that go under his Name, or not. He *was*, ſay *Jerom*, *Auſtin*, and *Epiphanius*; he *was not*, ſay *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Euſebius*. So that from what hath been premiſed, and from other Particulars which might have been added, I

* *Monday, June* 1, 1713.

may

may make the ſame Obſervation concerning ſome of the *Chriſtian Fathers*, that ſome very learned Men have made, concerning the *Jewiſh Maſters* and *Rabbies*. They have proved, that the Writings of the Latter abound with groſs Miſtakes and Falſities, relating even to *Jewiſh* Affairs and Cuſtoms, which they might eaſily have been acquainted with. So it is manifeſt, that the Former have deceived themſelves and others, about thoſe Matters which were proper to *Chriſtianity*, and might have been known by them with Eaſe: Even Theſe they have falſely reported, and therefore deſerve not the high Eſteem which ſome think is due to them.

And as they were thus miſtaken in *Matters of Fact*, ſo they were but meanly inſtructed in the *Principles of Revealed Religion*. They ſometimes ſpeak but indifferently of the *Trinity*, and eſpecially of the *Second Perſon*, as if they had not a true Apprehenſion of his *Divinity*. God was affirmed to be *Material* and *Corporeal* by ſome of the Antient Fathers, eſpecially by *Tertullian*, the firſt *Latin* Writer among the Chriſtians.

They were ſo weak in their Judgements, as to hold, that the Fall of the Good Angels was cauſed by their Luſt after Women. This was held by all the Firſt Fathers, but at laſt it was exploded by *Theodoret*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Auguſtine*, and others.

The Souls of Men, when ſeparated from the Bodies, do ſtill retain the Figure and Shape of the Bodies, ſay, *Irenæus*, L. 2. c. 22. and *Tertullian de Animâ*, Cap. 7. V. 9. whence this Latter proves the Soul to be Corporeal. *Lactantius* ſeems to hold, that the Soul of Man is a *Part of God*, ſtrictly and properly ſo ſpeaking.

The Doctrine of the *Pre-exiſtence* of human Souls before they came into Bodies, is favoured by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Origen*, who were great Admirers of the *Platonick* Notions.

* Some

* Some of the Fathers held, that the Souls of the Faithful are to be purged with the Fire that is to be at the Laſt Judgement. A Purgatory Fire, for all Souls after this Life, is mentioned by *Origen*, *Jerom*, *Ruſinus*, and others.

Juſtin Martyr, *Irenæus*, *Origen*, *Epiphanius*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, among the *Greek* Fathers; and *Lactantius*, *Jerom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtine*, among the *Latin* Ones; held, that none of the deceaſed Saints, eſpecially before Chriſt's Paſſion, were admitted into Heaven, but that they were diſpoſed of in ſome other Place.

Many of the Fathers, eſpecially *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Origen*, are ſuch great Aſſerters of the Natural Power of Man's Will, that they extol it to an extravagant Height: They and ſome others have moſt ſcandalous Expreſſions about it, ſuch as ſeem to exclude the Efficacy and Neceſſity of God's Grace.

Praying for the Dead was uſual with the Primitive Chriſtians, as we learn from *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Euſebius:* The laſt of theſe acquaints us, that as ſoon as *Conſtantine the Great* was dead, the Prieſts and People met together, and † *offered Prayers to God for his Soul.* This Sort of Devotion for the Deceaſed is mentioned and approved of by *Epiphanius*, *Auguſtin*, and ſeveral others.

Likewiſe, the Saints were *prayed to*, and that Practice recommended by the Fathers of the *Greek* Church, *Baſil*, *Nazianzen*, *Nyſſen*, *Chryſoſtom*, both the *Cyrils*, *Epiphanius*, *Theodoret*; and by the Fathers of the *Latin* Church, *Ambroſe*, *Jerom*, *Auguſtine*, *Fulgentius*, &c.

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* *Lactant.* Inſtitut. *l.* 7. *c.* 25. *Chryſoſt.* Serm. de Viginitate. *Auguſtin.* de Civ. Dei. *l.* 20. *c.* 25. *Ambroſ. Hilar.*

† Τὰς εὐχὰς ὑπὲρ τῆς Βασιλέως ψυχῆς ἀπεδίδοσαν τῷ Θεῷ. De vit. Conſtant. *l.* 4. *c.* 71.

Read the Firſt Writers of the Chriſtian Church, and you will find that they had ſome Apprehenſions, concerning the *Bread* and *Wine* in the Euchariſt, not much different from thoſe of the Church of *Rome* at this Day. Dr. *Grabe*, in his Notes on *Irenæus*, p. 399. acknowledges that *Cyril* of *Jeruſalem*, and *Gregory Nyſſen* held, that the Elements in the Sacrament are turned into the Real Body and Blood of Chriſt: And he might have mentioned ſome others. Thus we ſee what groundleſs and unſafe Notions theſe Men entertained, and what little Reaſon we have to give heed to them.

I am not alone in theſe Reflections on the Antients, as I will now briefly ſhew. Dr. *Cave*, in the Life of *Juſtin Martyr*, obſerves, that *he is commonly ſaid to be guilty of ſome Unorthodox Sentiments and Opinions, diſagreeing with the received Doctrines of the Church:* And the Dr. cannot deny it, though he labours to excuſe him: But he doth it very faintly, and in ſome things he freely owns that Father's Want of Orthodoxy.

Some of the Fathers themſelves, as *Euſebius*, *Jerom*, and *Auguſtine*, condemned ſeveral Paſſages in *Tertullian*'s Writings. His *Book of the Soul* is owned to be extravagant above all the reſt, being fraught with Unaccountable Notions and Wild Principles, diſagreeable to Reaſon and Philoſophy as well as ſound Divinity. It hath been obſerved, that in his Book *of Baptiſm* he hath a very mean Opinion of the Baptiſm of Infants, and affirms, that they are not to be baptized but in caſe of Neceſſity. The learned Dr. of the *Sorbon* pronounces thus, * *It is not eaſy to determine whether he be more to be condemned or blamed——It is difficult to ſay whether he did more Hurt or Good in the Church.*

* Du Pin, Bibliotheque.

A great * Judge tells us, that *Origen* in his Book of *Principles* hath many things that are *abſurd, impious, and blaſphemous.* And before this Cenſure, *Euſtathius* of *Antioch*, *Apollinaris*, *Theophilus* of *Alexandria*, *Epiphanius*, (Hæreſ. 64.) reckoned him as an Heretick. The laſt of theſe Writers calls him the *Father of the Arians.* It is true, he is cleared of Hereſy by *Euſebius* Biſhop of *Ceſarea*, and by *Socrates*, whom our Dr. *Cave* follows, and endeavours to plead in his Defence: But yet he concludes thus, † *After all it muſt be confeſſed, that he was guilty of great Miſtakes and raſh Propoſitions, which the largeſt Charity cannot excuſe.* It is well known how *Jerom* extolls him, and repreſents him as the Great Pillar of the Church; and yet at another time, that is, in his Diſputes with *Ruffinus*, he condemns him as very faulty. In his *Commentaries*, he approves of ſeveral odd Notions of that Father, but afterwards he reckoned them as Pernicious Errours. Thus this Father fared among other Writers; ſome times he was reputed Orthodox, and at other times he was voted a Heretick, and the Ringleader of the *Arian* Faction.

So *Euſebius*, juſt before-mentioned, met with the like different Fate: He was charged with *Arianiſm* by *Athanaſius*, *Euſtathius* of *Antioch*, *Baſil*, *Epiphanius*, *Hilary*, and all the *Greek* Fathers generally after the Second *Nicene* Council; and by *Jerom* in ſeveral Places of his Writings, by *Photius* in his *Epiſtles*, and in his *Bibliotheca*; not to mention later Writers, as *Baronius*, *Petavius*, *Hottinger*, *Billius*, *Voſſius*. But *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, *Gelaſius Cyzicenus*, (who are followed by *Grotius*, *Valeſius*, and Dr. *Cave*) clear him from the Imputation of *Arianiſm*, and peremptorily aſſert that he was Orthodox about the Trinity. Notwith-

* Phot. Bibliothec. Cod. 8. † In *Origen's* Life.

ſtanding this, he could not eſcape the harſh Doom of the Seventh General Council: * "It is known", ſay they, "to all the Faithful, who are acquainted "with the orthodox Faith of the Church, that he "was delivered up to a reprobate Mind, and was "of the ſame Opinion with the *Arians*". And the Council goes on to aggravate this Fault, and to give Inſtances of it. Thus you have the different, yea, contrary Judgements of the Antients themſelves concerning *Euſebius*.

Now, that which I remark here is this, that from the diſagreeing Sentiments of the Antients, concerning *Origen* and *Euſebius*, we may gather how difficult it is to know the true Senſe and Opinion of the moſt eminent Writers of the Primitive Church; and therefore their Writings are but a ſorry Direction to us, even in ſome of the moſt important Points of Chriſtianity. This alſo may be obſerved with Relation to *Tertullian*'s Works, which (as we have ſhewn) were cenſured by ſome of the moſt eminent Fathers; and yet *Cyprian*, who was as Eminent and Conſiderable as any of them, had ſo good an Opinion of his Writings, that he always called him his *Maſter*, and every Day read ſomething in his Books.

The famous Cardinal *Baronius* excuſes both *Montanus* and *Tertullian*, and repreſents them otherwiſe than they are commonly deciphered. And *Rigaltius*, in his Preface to the Reader before *Tertullian*'s Works, defends him againſt the uſual Objections that are made againſt his Notions and Opinions.

I could further take notice, that the *Novatians* are commended by *Socrates* the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian,

* Τίς γὰρ ὐκ ἔγνω τῶν πιςῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ γνῶσιν εἰληφότων ἀληθινῶν δογμάτων, ὅτι Ἐυσέβιος ὁ Παμφίλε εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν παραδοθεὶς, ὁμόδοξος καὶ σύμφρων γέγονε τοῖς τὰ Ἀρείε θρησκεύουσιν, &c.

ſtorian, as very pious and religious Perſons, of ſound Faith and laudable Manners; and he ſaith, they are diſliked and condemned by none but thoſe that are of licentious Converſations, and hate Strictneſs of Diſcipline: Yet we know that theſe *Novatian*'s are by ſome of the Fathers repreſented as dangerous Schiſmaticks, and very Erroneous in their Opinions. Whence I gather, that there is no Streſs to be laid on the Determinations of theſe Antient Writers; they cannot make a ſteady Judgement concerning Perſons, and Perſwaſions, and Actions. And indeed, this may be truly ſaid, that there is not one of the Fathers, that hath not ſome unſafe and groundleſs Opinions of his own in his Writings: Eſpecially thoſe of the firſt three Centuries, though *neareſt to the Apoſtles Times*, had very ill Notions concerning ſome of the moſt conſiderable Articles in Theology.

But it will be ſaid, Though the Primitive Fathers were faulty as to what they delivered concerning *ſome* Matters of Religion, yet they never fail us as to any of its *Eſſential* and *Subſtantial* Articles. I wiſh this could be proved, but I find there is no Probability of it; for even as to ſome Eſſential and Fundamental Doctrines, it appears that they were defective. * *Tertullian* (as was noted before) holds that God hath a Body.

The Son of God was not from Eternity, but there was a Time when he was not †, ſaith the ſame Writer: He ſaith § the Father is the whole Subſtance, and the Son is only a Portion of it. *Origen* hath ſtrange Conceits about the Second Perſon in the Trinity, inſomuch that || *Photius* is not afraid to ſay, that he launches out into *Blaſphemies*. *Euſebius* blaſphemes the Son of God, ſaith the ſame

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* Contr. Marcion, *lib.* 2. † Cont. Hermogenem. § Cont. Praxeam. || Bibliothec. *Numb.* 8.

* Writer. In his *Eccleſiaſtical Theology*, he plainly tells us, that the Holy Ghoſt is not truly God.

It is well known that *Lactantius* hath moſt pernicious Sentiments concerning the Trinity †.

Hilary holds that our Saviour had no real Affections, and that he did not truly and really ſuffer, becauſe he felt no Pain.

That the Wicked ſhall not riſe at the laſt Day, or that they ſhall not be judged, is the Aſſertion of *Clemens Alexandrinus* §, *Cyprian* ||, *Lactantius* **, and *Theodoret* ††.

Other Fundamental Points were diſowned by ſome of the Fathers: Thus §§ *Arnobius* holds, that Human Souls are ſubject to Mortality, as well as Mens Bodies.

Juſtin Martyr tells us ||||, that the glorious Body of the Sun was made to be worſhiped by the Heathens: *§* He declares that *Socrates*, and the like Heathen Philoſophers, who ordered their Lives only by Reaſon, were *Chriſtians*; and *†* that now, under the Goſpel, Men may be ſaved though they retain *Judaiſm*.

Jerom aſſerts, that the Providence of God is not Univerſal, that it extends not to inanimate or irrational Creatures. *Comment. in Habak.*

All theſe Doctrines are oppoſite to the very *Eſſential Principles* of the Chriſtian Religion. And even *||* one of theſe Antients, whom I laſt quoted, freely confeſſes, that both the *Greek and Latin Fathers erred in Matters of Faith.* So that whereas ſome cry up theſe Writers as very *knowing* Perſons in Matters of Chriſtianity, it is as clear as the Sun, that they had a very ſmall Share of Knowledge;

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* *Num.* 9. † De Trinit. & Comment. in *Pſal.* lxviii. § Strom. *l.* 2. || Ad Quirin. *l.* 3. ** Inſtit. *l.* 7. *c.* 20. †† In *Pſalm* i. 6. §§ Adv. Gent. *l.* 2. |||| Dialog. cum Tryph. *§* Apolog. 2. *†* Dialog. cum Tryph.

|| *Erraverunt in fide tam Græci quam Latini.* Hieronym. Epiſt. ad Pammach. & Ocean.

and

and thence we may infer what Credit and Authority their Writings merit.

CHAP. III.

HAVING demonſtrated that the Firſt Writers of the Chriſtian Church were thus deficient, I will now aſſign the *Reaſons* of it. It could not be otherwiſe, as I ſhall make it evident from the following Particulars.

Firſt, Some of theſe Writers were Novices, and newly admitted into the Chriſtian Religion, and conſequently had but a ſlight View of it. Being but new Converts, they were not thoroughly inſtructed in the Faith. Even thoſe of them that were famed for their Eloquence and Wit, and were Learned and Knowing in the Arts and human Literature, were very meanly skilled in divine Truths; and the more Learned they were, they were on that Account the more capable of corrupting the Evangelical Doctrines. For moſt of them had been bred up in the Heathen Notions, and they brought thoſe with them into the Church. *Juſtin Martyr*, *Melito*, *Athenagoras*, *Apollinaris*, *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, *Tatian*, *Irenæus*, *Clement* the *Alexandrine*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and ſeveral others, were Men of vaſt Abilities and Capacities, of acute Judgements and great Learning; but they debauched the Chriſtian Doctrines, by making them anſwer to the Pagan Principles and Maxims, which they had been at firſt inſtructed in.

This is acknowledged by a * learned Foreigner, who tells us, that *Clemens* of *Alexandria* was *half a*

* Du Pin. Cent. 3.

Platoniſt, and half a Chriſtian. Afterwards he ſaith, *He was more a Philoſopher than a Divine.* This is owned by a worthy * Writer of our own Church, who, ſpeaking of *Juſtin Martyr*, ſaith thus, "Having been brought up under ſo many ſeveral "Inſtitutions of Philoſophy, and coming (as moſt "of the Firſt Fathers did) freſh out of the Schools "of *Plato*, it is the leſs to be wondered at, if the "Notions, which he had there imbibed, ſtuck to "him, and he endeavoured, as much as might be, "to reconcile the *Platonick* Principles with the "Dictates of Chriſtianity". And of *Tertullian*, he ſpeaks thus, † "It cannot be denied, but that he "hath ſome unwarrantable Notions, common with "other Writers of thoſe Times, and ſome more "peculiar to himſelf: But he lived in an Age "when the Faith was yet green and tender, when "the Church had not publickly and ſolemnly de-"fined Things,——when the Philoſophy of the "Schools was mainly predominant, and Men ran "immediately from the *Stoa* and the Academy to "the Church".

He gives the like Account of *Origen*, "§ He "traded", ſaith he, "greatly in the Writings of the "Heathens, and was infinitely ſolicitous, to make "the Doctrines of Chriſtianity look as little unlike, "as might be, to their beſt and beloved Notions". Again he ſaith, "What *Marcellus* Biſhop of *An-*"*cyra*, long ſince objected againſt him, is unqueſti-"onably true, that coming freſh out of the Philo-"ſophick Schools, and having been a long time "accurately trained up in the Principles and Books "of *Plato*, he applied himſelf to divine Things be-"fore he was ſufficiently diſpoſed to receive them, "and fell upon writing concerning them, while ſe-

* Dr. *Cave*, in his Life of *Juſtin Martyr*.
† In his Life of *Tertullian*.
§ In the Life of *Origen*.

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" cular Learning had yet the Predominancy in his " Mind, and ſo he unwarily mingled Philoſophick " Notions with Chriſtian Principles, further than " the Analogy of the Chriſtian Faith would allow". The Caſe being thus, who can expect that *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, or *Origen*, (the chiefeſt of all the Antient Writers) ſhould be *knowing* Perſons in the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, much more that they ſhould have a greater Stock of divine Knowledge than any of thoſe that ſucceeded them ; as ſome bold Men of late have had the Confidence to aver, without any Shew of Senſe or Reaſon ?

Arnobius was a Man of great Wit and Learning, and hath eloquently defended the Chriſtian Religion againſt the Pagans : But hear what that excellent Writer, before quoted, ſaith of him ; " * It " doth not appear, that at the time of his writing " he had read any conſiderable Part of the Bible, " more than the obvious Paſſages of the Evangelical Hiſtory ; or that he had accurately conſidered " the Doctrines and Principles of Chriſtianity : He " was not then ſo much as a *Catechumen*, inſtructed " in the firſt Rudiments of the Faith".

As for *Lactantius*, it is confeſſed by one that is a great Admirer of the Antient Fathers, that " his " Eſteem and Authority in the Church of God is " but very ſmall, for as much as he was uninſtructed " in the Scriptures, and was furniſhed but with a " ſmall Share of Chriſtian Learning". So Mr. *Nelſon*, in the Life of Biſhop *Bull.* p. 311. He was a well-meaning Author, but hath but little of Solidity and Argument, and hath ſeveral odd and unaccountable Notions concerning the Chriſtian Inſtitution.

Who could expect that *Syneſius*, Biſhop of *Ptolomais* in *Africa*, who had been bred a Philoſopher, and had ſpent his time in running through all Sects,

* In the Life of *Arnobius*.

ſhould

ſhould be well skilled in the Articles of the Chriſtian Religion? Accordingly, ſome of his Letters teſtify, that he was a Stranger to ſome of the chief Points of that Holy Inſtitution.

How then can any Man have the Face to aſſert, that theſe Firſt Writers of the Chriſtian Church underſtood *more* of Chriſtianity, than any of thoſe that came after them? This is very ſtrange and prodigious! and from what I have already ſaid (much more from what ſhall be further ſuggeſted) the Falſity of it is moſt apparent. Could they be the moſt knowing Men in the Principles of Chriſtianity, who were newly come out of the Schools of the Philoſophers, and had not time to ſtudy the Chriſtian Doctrines, nor to peruſe the Scriptures wherein theſe are contained? Thus 'tis plain, that their *Vicinity to the Days of the Apoſtles*, (which is ſo much talked of) was no Furtherance of their Knowledge; yea, I have ſhewed, that the Writings of the Antienteſt Fathers, who were neareſt to the Apoſtolick Times, are moſt defective in the Account which they give of the Chriſtian Principles. What Dr. *Cave* (at another time) ſaith, hath no Bottom, but is grounded on Miſtakes: "* The "Notices", ſaith he, "of former Times are re-"commended to us with this peculiar Advantage, "that the Stream muſt needs be purer and clearer, "the nearer it comes to the Fountain". He hath contradicted this *himſelf*, in the Quotations I have cited from him. It is plain, that the free Intercourſe between the Fountain and the Streams was intercepted, and the Streams grew muddy and impure, and had not time to ſettle. Thoſe firſt Writers had not Leiſure to examine and compare the Scriptures, and to collate one Place with another, which certainly is the *beſt* Help to underſtand them.

* Epiſt. Ded. before his *Antiquitates Chriſtianæ*.

Secondly,

Secondly, They doated on *Tradition*, which is oftentimes a very imperfect and uncertain Way of having the Knowledge of Things conveyed to us. When the Antients could not give a fair Account, from Reaſon or Scripture, that ſuch or ſuch a Doctrine or Practice ſhould be received or approved of, they had Recourſe to *Tradition*, and they reſted on *That*, and thereby deceived themſelves. It is true, the Apoſtle commends the *Corinthians* for *keeping the Traditions, as he delivered them to them*, 1 Cor. xi. 2. and he bids the *Theſſalonians hold the Traditions which they had been taught*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 15. But theſe Traditions were Doctrines that were delivered by the Apoſtle himſelf by Word of Mouth, or in Writing; as it follows in the latter Text, *whether by Word or our Epiſtle.* But ſome of the Antient Writers talk of Traditions of another Sort, namely, ſuch as cannot be proved to have come from the Apoſtles, but were rather Forgeries, and ſuperſtitious Inventions, and diſagreeing with what is plainly revealed. It may, in ſome Degree, be ſaid of ſome of thoſe Antients, as it was ſaid of the Scribes and Phariſees, *That they made the Commandment of God of no effect by their Tradition*, Matt. xv. 6. They were miſerably impoſed upon by thoſe Perſons who told them, they had ſuch and ſuch Doctrines and Practices derived to them from the very Apoſtles, which thing could not but render them credible and authentick. *Papias*, beforementioned, was the Great Ringleader and Father of theſe unwritten and oral Traditions: He writ five Books *of the Sayings of our Lord*, as * *Euſebius* tells us, which were fraught with Fables and groundleſs Fictions. *Irenæus*'s Books abound with Doctrines and Cuſtoms, which he ſaith were received from Apoſtolical Tradition; but the moſt Learned give no Credit to him.

* Hiſt. Eccleſ. *l.* 3. *c.* 39.

Oblations

Oblations for the Dead, and the conſtant Uſe of the *Sign of the Croſs*, are grounded on *Tradition* by *Tertullian* *. So is *Trine Immerſion* by *Tertullian*, by *Jerom*, by *Baſil*. Standing at Prayer all *Whitſuntide*, and Praying towards the *Eaſt*, and other Rites (particularly in the Sacraments) are built upon Tradition, according to *Baſil*, *De Spiritu Sancto*, cap. 27.

All the *Aſian* Churches kept *Eaſter* on the Day that the *Jews* kept their Paſſover, ἐκ παραδόσεως ἀρχαιοτέρας, from an *old Tradition*, ſaith *Euſebius*, Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 5. *c.* 23. But all other Churches in the World kept it on the Day of Chriſt's Reſurrection, commonly called *Sunday*; and this they did, ἐξ Ἀποστολικῆς παραδόσεως, by Vertue of an *Apoſtolical Tradition*, ſaith the ſame Writer in the ſame Place: Yea, the Time of celebrating *Eaſter* at *Rome*, and in all the Weſtern Churches, was ſaid to be by the Direction of the Apoſtles St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*; and on the other ſide, the time of obſerving that Feaſt in the *Eaſtern* Churches, was ſaid to be derived from St. *John* and *Philip*. Where, by the Bye, obſerve how unadviſedly Mr. *Dodwell* (in his Diſcourſe of Schiſm) ſaith, That *the Primitive Fathers appealed to Apoſtolical Tradition with the greateſt Aſſurance in the Paſchal Controverſy*; whereas it is well known the Traditions about it did not agree. But is it not ſtrange that they ſhould make Tradition, yea, Apoſtolical Tradition, ſerve for the Supporting of contradictory Practices? And it is worth our obſerving, that it was in the Age next to the Apoſtles, that theſe two Contrary Parties appealed to Apoſtolical Tradition, and both were confident that their Appeal was well-grounded.

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* *Harum & aliarum ejuſmodi diſciplinarum ſi leges expoſtulas Scripturarum, nullam invenies; Traditio tibi pretendetur*, &c. De Coron. Milit.

The

The Cuſtom of *Faſting on Fridays* deſcended from the Apoſtles, ſaith *Epiphanius*; but others declare for *Saturday*. Some of the Fathers found the *Quadrageſimal Faſt* on Apoſtolical Tradition, but the known Eccleſiaſtical * Hiſtorian allows not of it. Beſides the Fathers already mentioned, † *Damaſcen* alledges Tradition for *bowing towards the Eaſt, and worſhipping the Croſs and Images*. *Juſtin Martyr* (l. 1.) tells us, that it was a Tradition of the Apoſtles, that Chriſt preached but one Year. But *Irenæus* (l. 2. c. 39.) alledges a *Tradition* from St. *John*, that Chriſt preached 'till he was towards fifty Years of age. *Clemens Alexandrius* (Strom. l. 7.) ſaith it was from Apoſtolical *Tradition*, that it is not lawful for Chriſtians to go to Law. It were eaſy to ſhew that *Cyprian*, the *Cyrills*, *Baſil*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Ambroſe*, *Epiphanius*, *Vincentius Lirinenſis*, ſtretch Tradition too far, and reverence it at an immoderate Rate. *Baſil*, particularly in his Treatiſe *of the Holy Spirit*, Chap. 27. ſtiffly maintains the Credit of Unwritten Traditions, and ſeems to equal it with that of the Scripture.

And I could name other Fathers, who defend ſeveral Superſtitious Uſages, merely becauſe they were perſuaded that they came down to them from the firſt Age of Chriſtianity. And even *Auguſtine* makes uſe of this Topick; he ‡ ſaith, that the *Giving the Euchariſt to Infants* was derived from Apoſtolical Tradition; and allows of Tradition, though we cannot trace it to the Times of the Apoſtles. Speaking of the Controverſy about the Baptiſm of Hereticks, he ſaith, § *The Apoſtles did not preſcribe any thing in this matter, but this Cuſtom* (*viz.* of not Rebaptizing thoſe who were baptized by Hereticks)

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* Lib. 5. cap. 21.
† De Orthod. fid. l. 4. c. 13. et Orat de Imaginib.
‡ De peccati merit. et remiſſ. l. 1. c. 20.
§ De Baptiſmo, lib. 5. cap. 23.

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ought to be believed to have come from Tradition, as many other Things which the Catholick Church obſerves. Here this Good Father happened to be in the right as to the *Inſtance*; but in many others he, and other Antient Writers of the Church, alledged Tradition to juſtify thoſe Rites and Practices which had no good Foundation. Thus they were abuſed and deceived by following this uncertain Conduct; they fell into Errours and Miſtakes, becauſe of the great Eſteem which they bore to Tradition, which they generally thought included in it unexceptionable Authority. This was that, which ſome of the Fathers themſelves owned to be the Fault of the rankeſt *Hereticks: Origen* particularly takes notice of this in his ſecond Homily on *Ezekiel*; And it is obſerved by *Euſebius* concerning the Followers of *Photinus*, that they bragged * that *all the Firſt Fathers* received and taught the very ſame things that they did.

To this may be aſcribed the greateſt Part of the Errours and Superſtitions of the *Church of Rome*, and therefore it is no wonder that *Tradition* is ſo highly prized by the Writers of that Church. It is the Doctrine of the Council of Trent, that † *Traditions, whether they belong to Faith or Manners, are to be received and venerated with the like pious Affection and Reverence, that the Books of the Old and New Teſtament are received and venerated.* Nay, according to one of the *Roman* Doctors, they deſerve *more* Reverence and Reſpect, becauſe § *there is more Virtue in Traditions for the Confuta-*

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* Τὰς μὲν πρόλεξις ἅπαντας παρειληφέναι καὶ διδαχθέναι ταῦτα ἃ ἄυλοι λέγουσι. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 5. cap. ult.

† Traditiones tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes cum veteris ac novi Teſtamenti libris pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia ſuſcipi ac venerari. *Seſſ.* 4. *Decret.* 1.

§ Ad confutandos hæreticos major vis in traditionibus quàm in Scripturâ. *Melch. Can. Loc. Theolog. l.* 3. *c.* 3.

tion

tion of Hereticks, than there is in the Scriptures. Hence we plainly ſee what is one main Source of the Errours in the Church of *Rome*; and at the ſame time we may ſee, that the ſame Cauſe had the ſame Effect in ſome of the Writings of the *Fathers*. And therefore there is little heed to be given to what a late Author ſaith, * *The Fathers lived neareſt to the Apoſtles, and ſome of them converſed with them; from which Circumſtance they had the Advantage of Traditionary Expoſitions.* But from what hath been ſaid it appears, that ſome of theſe Traditionary Expoſitions were ſo far from being *Advantagious*, that they gave birth to ſeveral groſs Errours. I will conclude this Head with the Words of a great Prelate: † *The Superaddition of Articles*, ſaith he, *derived from a pretended Tradition, and not contained in Scripture, is a great Sin and a great Danger.*

But I paſs to another Reaſon and Cauſe of the Inability and Deficiency of the Fathers as to their Knowledge.

CHAP. IV.

THIRDLY then, ſome of the Church-Writers in the firſt Times, though skilled in moſt Sorts of Human Literature, yet knew little or nothing of the Language wherein the Old Teſtament was written; others underſtood nothing of the Tongue wherein the New Teſtament was penned. *Juſtin Martyr*, *Origen*, *Cyrill of Alexandria*, *Chryſoſtom*, miſtake the plain Meaning of the Name *Iſrael*, and interpret it *Rectus Dei*; yea even St. *Jerom*, who was skilled in the *Hebrew* Tongue interprets it thus. The Etymology of *Mary* is

* Collier. Eccleſ. Hiſt. of Britain, p. 519.
† Biſhop Taylor's Diſſuaſive from Popery.

ſtrangely

ſtrangely aſſigned by ſome Fathers; it ſignifies *Illumination*, ſaith *Gregory Thaumaturgus*; other *Greek* Writers ſay, it is the ſame with *Domina*. Thus they had not thoſe *Helps* for knowing the true and genuine Meaning of the Words in the Scripture, which their Followers have had, and which we at this day have. It is plain that * *Clement of Alexandria*, † *Euſebius*, and § *Cyrill of Jeruſalem*, had no Skill in the *Hebrew* Tongue; for otherwiſe they would not have taken Ἰησοῦς, *Jeſus*, to be originally a *Greek* Name. ‡ Dr. *Cave* owns, that *as to Skill in Hebrew and other Eaſtern Languages the Firſt Fathers were generally defective:* An Inſtance of which he gives in *Juſtin Martyr*'s Derivation of the Word *Satanas*, in his Dialogue with *Trypho*; *A Fault*, ſaith he, *the leſs to be pardoned in one that was born and lived among the Samaritans and the Jews*. *Severianus*, Biſhop in *Cæloſyria* and a celebrated Preacher at the End of the fourth Century, tells us in one of his Homilies, that the firſt Man was called *Adam*, which Word ſignifies *Fire* in the *Hebrew*. *Auguſtine* for want of Knowledge in the Holy Tongue, commits many Faults in his Interpretations of Scripture; eſpecially in his *Expoſitions on the Pſalms*, he often miſtakes the Senſe of the Pſalmiſt. As to his, and ſome other Fathers Unskilfulneſs in the *Greek*, the Proofs of it are too commonly known. I might mention *Pacianus*, famous for his Eloquent Diſcourſes, ſaith St. *Jerom*, who in one of his Epiſtles giving an Account of the Title *Catholick*, which the Orthodox Chriſtians were known by, lets us know that it ſignifies *Obedient* according to the Judgement of the moſt Learned. So then 'tis evident that ſome of the Antient Writers of the Chriſtian Church, though they lived in thoſe early Times,

* Pædagog. l. 3. c. 12. † De Demonſtrat. Evang. § Catechef.
‡ In the Life of *Juſtin Martyr*.

were

were not ſo well qualified for underſtanding and expounding the Holy Writ as thoſe that were farther off.

A judicious Author (Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton*, Sermon on 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.) hath left us this Paſſage: *The moſt partial for Antiquity cannot but ſee and confeſs thus much, that for the Literal Senſe the Interpreters of our Times, becauſe of their Skill in the* Original *Languages, have generally ſurpaſſed the beſt of the Antients.* An other, a very * Competent Judge in this Matter, owns that *many things are every day cleared more and more, by applying the Knowledge of the Languages to the Text of the Scripture.* And it is the Confeſſion of one who was a great Admirer of the Antient Doctors and Fathers, that thoſe that came after them exceeded them in Knowledge; yea, and that † *the younger* and *later* theſe Moderns are, the greater is their Inſight into Divine Matters. The Famous *Cajetan*'s Words are remarkable, § *Nullus deteſtetur novum S. Scripturæ ſenſum*, &c. *Let no man diſlike a New Senſe of Scripture, becauſe it differs from that of the Antient Doctors, but let him ſearch more narrowly into the Text and Context, and if he finds that Senſe agreeable to them, let him praiſe God, who hath not tyed the Expoſition of the Scriptures to the Senſes given by the Old Doctors.* We ſee then how weak and groundleſs Mr. *Dodwell*'s Aſſertion is, that *thoſe Earlieſt Ages had all the Helps of Scripture that we have, and more Helps to underſtand them than we can pretend to at this diſtance.* (Diſc. againſt Occaſional Communion). We ſee how eaſily this is confuted. And therefore let ſome ſay what they pleaſe, I believe every Impartial and Intelligent Perſon will freely grant, the Senſe and Meaning of the Holy Scrip-

* Thorndike Epilog. B. 1. C. 4.

† Quò juniores, eò perſpicaciores. *Salmeron in Epiſt. ad Rom. cap. 5.*

§ Præfat. in Geneſ.

tures is now better underſtood, and the whole Body of Chriſtian Divinity more exactly ſearched into and explained, than in the Days of the Fathers, even the moſt Learned of them. The Moderns far excell the Antients in the right Stating of a Queſtion, in Critical examining and ſcanning the Grammar of every Text, in the Exactneſs of Method, in the Accuracy of the Compoſure, in Cloſe Reaſoning and Arguing. Let them think of this who had rather be Ignorant and Err with the Fathers, than think aright with the Moderns.

Fourthly, It is impoſſible to have any Satisfaction from the moſt Antient Writers about ſeveral Points of Divinity, becauſe they were not ſtarted, much leſs explained, diſcuſſed, and examined in thoſe early days. The Firſt Chriſtian Writers do not enter into the Controverſy of the *Trinity*, becauſe there was no Diſpute about it then: And therefore we cannot expect any particular Explications of that Doctrine. The Terms they uſed were ſometimes Obſcure and Ambiguous, and they ſeem not to underſtand them themſelves. So as to the particular Doctrine of our *Saviour's Divinity*, St. *Jerom* acknowledges that, before *Arius* appeared, the Writers of the Church were * *not Cautious* in what they ſaid relating to that Point. So 'tis St. *Auguſtine*'s Obſervation, that before the Doctrines about *Original Sin* and *Free Will* came to be controverted, the Fathers ſpake but † Careleſsly. 'Tis well known to the Learned, that ſome of the Queſtions that have made the greateſt Noiſe in the Chriſtian Churches, were not heard of in the Times of the Primitive Writers, and conſequently their

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* Innocenter quædam & minùs cautè loquuti ſunt, & quæ non poſſint perverſorum hominum calumniam declinare. *Apol. adv. Ruſin.*

† Pelagianis nondum litigantibus veteres negligentiùs loquuti ſunt. *Cont. Julian.* lib. 1. cap. 2.

Writings

Writings cannot give us any Satisfaction about the Debates of the later and preſent Ages.

Nor indeed can we expect to be ſatisfied by them as to any other Doctrines, if we conſider that they generally took them upon Truſt, and did not examine them. We find that they have little or nothing to ſay for them; only they embraced them becauſe they were delivered to them from good Hands, as they thought. And they are wont to ſupport and maintain even ſome of thoſe Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, which are of the greateſt Moment, by Poor and Jejune Arguments, and many of them utterly Inconſequential. What *Photius* ſaith of ſome of the Writings of *Irenæus*, is true of a great many Paſſages in other Antient Eccleſiaſtical Writers, * *The Real Truth of the Church's Doctrines is adulterated by falſe and ſpurious Reaſonings.* And truly, ſeveral of thoſe Antients were not able to afford any other, they could not judge of the Reality and Soundneſs of ſome of the Arguments which were uſed, but innocently thought them to have ſome Virtue and Strength in them. I am perſuaded, that if they were permitted to come upon the Stage of this World again, they would wonder to ſee that thoſe, who ſince their Time have had the Means of attaining to clearer Light and Knowledge than they had, yet reſolve to defend and maintain the weak and falſe Reaſonings which they met with in their Writings. They would ſtand amazed to ſee how ſome of thoſe things, which they aſſerted without any Proof at all, and which were mere Conjectures, are ſtiffly maintained as Unqueſtionable Truths, merely on the bare Authority of thoſe Antients. Yea, it would grieve theſe Humble Souls to obſerve, how they are unduly extolled by ſome Men for their

* Ἡ κατὰ ἐκκλησιαστικὰ δόγματα ἀληθείας ἀκρίβεια νόθοις λογισμοῖς κιβδηλεύεται. Cod. 120.

Exquiſite Knowledge and Skill in Points of Theology, and in interpreting the Scriptures; when 'tis evident that they were not, at that Time and in thoſe Circumſtances which they were then in, capable of ſuch a Performance. I conclude then that it is a groſs Miſtake and groundleſs Errour, (which yet prevails with many) that the moſt early Writers of the Church were the beſt Judges and Interpreters of all the Doctrines contained in the Scriptures, and that they upheld them with the beſt and ſtrongeſt Arguments.

Fifthly, 'Tis no great Sign of their being well skilled in the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, that there never were *ſo many Errours and Hereſies* as in thoſe Times: And ſome of thoſe Hereſies were not only fooliſh and ridiculous, but impious and abominable. In the firſt Century, *Simon Magus*, *Ebion*, and *Cerinthus*, and the *Nicolaites* infeſted the Chriſtian Church; as is atteſted by *Hegeſippus*, (*apud Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 4. *c.* 22.) and *Origen*, (*Tract.* 27. *in Matth.*) and ſeveral others, though according to *Clemens Alexandrinus* (*Strom. l.* 7.) and *Firmilianus* (*Epiſt. ad Cyprian*) there were no Hereticks in the firſt Age. Which by the Bye confirms what I have been and am advancing, that the Teſtimony of the Fathers is not to be truſted to. In the ſecond Age *Saturnius*, *Baſilides*, *Carpocrates*, *Menander*, with the whole Set of *Gnoſticks*, and thoſe other Hereticks, *Valentine*, *Cerdon*, *Martian*, *Montanus* diſturbed the Church. In the Third Century were *Sabellius*, *Samoſatenus*, *Noetus*, *Manes* and his Diſciples. In the Fourth was *Arius* the Chief Heretick, who eclipſed all the reſt in his Time. In the Fifth appeared the *Pelagians*, *Neſtorians*, *Eutychians*, and ſeveral others of different Denominations. So that I may truly ſay there were more Sects in Religion in the five firſt Centuries, than have been in all Ages ſince: And even the *Two firſt* Ages of the Church produced ſome of the groſſeſt Hereticks

Hereticks of all; and ſome of them that writ againſt thoſe Errours were erroneous themſelves; which ſhews that they did not rightly and thoroughly underſtand the Chriſtian Doctrines which they treated of. The Catalogue of Hereſies drawn up by *Epiphanius* is very arbitrary and uncertain. He was one *of no great Judgement and Reaſoning, he generally took his Accounts of Things upon Truſt, ſuffering himſelf to be impoſed upon, by thoſe Narratives which the ſeveral Parties had publiſhed of the Proceedings, either of their own or their Adverſaries Side, without due Search and Examination, which ran him upon infinite Miſtakes, Inconſiſtencies, and Confuſions.* Thus Dr. *Cave.* The ſame may partly be ſaid of *Irenæus*, *Philaſtrius*, *Theodoret*, who have left us a Catalogue of *Hereſies* in thoſe days. So that it appears, that there was then a Multitude of Hereſies, and the Accounts that were given of them were as numerous and various. And it is deplorable, that ſome of the Chriſtians that were moſt *Eminent* for their Learning, as *Tatian*, *Tertullian*, *Arius*, *Neſtorius*, *Macedonius*, *Eunomius*, *Photinus*, *Eudoxius*, *Acacius*, *Sabellius*, *Apollinarius* (the greateſt Man of his Times, as all Writers that mention him acknowledge) *Pelagius*, were Ringleaders and Authors of Heretical Opinions. And truly it can't be wondered at that ſome of the Learnedeſt Biſhops and Prieſts, and other Churchmen in thoſe early Days, perverted the Doctrines of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, if we reflect on what was done by the Eccleſiaſtical Guides, Doctors of Law, Prieſts and Clergymen in the *Jewiſh* Church: They wretchedly depraved the Law, and diſtorted the Primitive Senſe of it by their corrupt Interpretations, falſe Gloſſes and Comments. This Practice was as it were Imitated by too many of the Doctors of the Chriſtian Church, who though they oppoſed ſome of the Hereticks, yet they were partly tainted by them.

So that there is little Reaſon to boaſt of the *Orthodoxy* of thoſe Times, and the *Knowledge* of the Firſt Chriſtians. It is plain that they themſelves corrupted the Purity of the Chriſtian Faith, and fell, into palpable Errours, which ſome of their Writings are infected with at this Day. *Hilary* Biſhop of *Poictiers*, in one of his Diſcourſes addreſſed to the Emperor *Conſtantius*, complains of the *Great Variety of Creeds: New Creeds*, he ſaith, *were made every Year, and every Month*, which rendered their Faith uncertain and wavering. And afterwards a learned and pious Father bewails the great Degeneracy and Corruption that was in his Time, with reference to the Study and Profeſſion of Theology: He condemns that * *Luxuriant* and *Artificial Divinity* which prevailed: He complains that they had laid aſide † the *ſimple, plain, and natural* Way of diſcourſing, which is the direct Way to Errour and Miſtakes. In a Word, we owe all or moſt of our Hereſies, which at this Day infeſt the Church, to many of the Antient Chriſtian Writers. And who indeed could expect, that thoſe Ages after the Apoſtles ſhould be free from Errour and Hereſy, when we read that the Chriſtian Churches in the Apoſtles Times were not exempt from theſe? But the Unhappineſs of thoſe After-Ages was, that they had not the Apoſtles to correct them; and thence the Writings of thoſe Antient Chriſtians abound with many unſafe and dangerous Paſſages.

Sixthly, Chriſtianity was to grow up by certain Steps and Periods of Time, and therefore it cannot rationally be expected, that the Writers of thoſe Firſt Times ſhould be as well inſtructed in the Chriſtian Religion, as thoſe whoſe Lot it was to

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* Τὸ περιττὸν καὶ καλλιγλωττισμένον τῆς θεολογίας ἐνλεχνον. Greg. Naz.

† Τὸ ἁπλῶν τε καὶ εὐγενὲς τοῦ λόγε. Ibid.

live

live in the Ages afterwards. Even the very Canon of the Scripture of the New Teſtament was not fixed and ſettled in the firſt Ages of the Church, as we learn from *Euſebius*, in his *Eccleſ. Hiſt.* l. 3. c. 24, 25. Though the *Eaſtern* Churches received the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, yet many of the *Weſtern* Chriſtians queſtioned the Authority of it. St. *James*'s Epiſtle, and the Second of St. *Peter*, and the Second and Third of St. *John*, together with that of St. *Jude*, and the Book of the *Revelation*, were not generally owned to be Canonical. It was a conſiderable time afterwards before they were received into the Canon of the Holy Scripture; namely, when thoſe Writings and the Authors of them were deliberately conſidered and examined. And ſo it was with ſome of the Chriſtian Doctrines, they were not univerſally and unanimouſly embraced, 'till after a deliberate Enquiry into them. The Truth is, there are ſeveral *Degrees of the Evangelical Diſpenſation*, and it was not deſigned by Heaven, that it ſhould be compleat at once. That the Goſpel-Truths and Diſcoveries were gradually diſpenſed, is very clear from what we find delivered in the Writings of the Four Evangeliſts. He that doth not own this, doth as good as tell us, that he never read thoſe Writings, or elſe wilfully miſunderſtands them. Nor was Chriſtianity arrived to its Heighth in thoſe Times, to which the *Acts of the Apoſtles* and the *Apoſtolical Epiſtles* relate; for even in theſe Latter, we are informed that ſome *Jewiſh* Rites and Ceremonies were obſerved, to comply with the Judaizing Chriſtians. And even the wonderful Gifts and Miracles in thoſe Times ſhew, that the Church of Chriſt was in its weak and imperfect State, and wanted thoſe extraordinary Helps to ſupport it. It is a Miſtake then that thoſe Firſt Times were the perfecteſt Times of Chriſtianity; for even then,

by divine Order and Appointment without doubt, Judaiſm was mixed with Chriſtianity.

And the Nature of that Diſpenſation required it; for we read, that *the Kingdom of Heaven* (that is, the Goſpel) *is compared to a Grain of Muſtard Seed, which is the leaſt of all Seeds, but groweth to be the greateſt among Herbs, and becomes a Tree,* Matt. xiii. 31. That is, Chriſtianity was to increaſe and improve by Degrees: It was to be little and mean at firſt, and afterwards to grow greater and more conſiderable. Which I find thus expreſſed by an Antient Writer in the Chriſtian Church *: "It is fitting", ſaith he, "that the Underſtanding, "Knowledge, and Wiſdom, not only of ſingle "Perſons, but of All, not only of one Man, but "of the whole Church ſhould increaſe, and make "great Proficiency by certain Degrees of Years "and Ages". And again, ſaith he †, "It is be-"coming the Chriſtian Religion, that it ſhould imi-"tate theſe Laws of Proficiency; that is, that it "ſhould be confirmed by Years, that it ſhould be "augmented by Time, that it ſhould be ſublimed "by Age". To this Purpoſe a learned Writer ſaith, || *He is aſhamed to tell, what a falſe and abſurd Interpretation was made by the beſt Writers among the Antients, on* Gen. vi. 2. *But there will be this good Effect of it, that the Reader will ſee, what Proficiency the Church of Chriſt hath made in the Knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures and Divine Matters, from that Time to this; for many things that were obſcure and doubtful, and unknown to learned Men in thoſe Days,*

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* *Creſcat oportet, & multùm vehementérque proficiat tam ſingulorum quàm Omnium, tam unius hominis quàm Totius Eccleſiæ, ætatum ac ſeculorum gradibus, Intelligentia, Scientia, Sapientia.* Vincent. Lirinenſ. Commonitor. 1. cap. 28.

† *Chriſtianæ Religionis dogma ſequatur has decet Profectuum leges, ut annis ſc. conſolidetur, dilatetur tempore, ſublimetur ætate.* cap. 25.

|| *Pudet dicere quæ de optimis Scriptoribus*, &c. Perer. Commentar. in *Gen.* vi. 2.

are

are now plain and perſpicuous, and thoroughly underſtood even by thoſe that are but of moderate Learning.

It is with Religion, as it is with Arts and Sciences, the firſt Eſſays are ſeldom perfect: They arrive not to their Heighth at firſt, they require a gradual Improvement. And ſo it is here, the Primitive Chriſtians were not grown up to that Perfection of Knowledge and Underſtanding, which was deſigned by the Author of our Religion. Chriſtianity was in its Infancy, at moſt in its Childhood, when thoſe Men wrote, and therefore it is no Wonder that they *ſpake as Children*, that *they underſtood as Children*, that *they thought as Children.* This was according to the Oeconomy they were then under: And beſides, as I ſaid before, they had not Time and Leiſure to ſearch into the Chriſtian Doctrines, nor had they laid in a ſufficient Stock and Fund for that Purpoſe, they being but newly adopted into the Chriſtian Church: Yet they were willing to appear in its Behalf, to defend it as well as they could, which was accepted by Heaven.

He that will vouchſafe to weigh all theſe Particulars, will be convinced, that the Fathers, however venerable they are on ſome Accounts (as moſt certainly they are, and no Man of Judgement ever denied it) were not Perſons of extraordinary *Knowledge*; yea, they were very defective in it. So that they are of no certain Uſe to determine our Opinions, and to ſettle our Perſwaſions. It cannot certainly be known from their Writings, what was the Faith of the Primitive Church in many conſiderable Points. But, on the contrary, if we be not cautious, they will debauch our Judgements in ſeveral Articles of Religion, and will impoſe upon us even in Matter of Fact. It muſt needs be ſo, becauſe their Zeal was greater than their Knowledge, and they had attained only to a lame and imperfect Diſcovery of the Doctrines of Chriſtianity.

Chriſtianity. So much concerning the firſt Head, *viz. The Inſufficiency of the Knowledge of the Primitive Fathers.*

CHAP V.

II. I AM next to conſider their *Moral Diſpoſitions* and *Qualities*, their Lives and Practices, their Sanctity and Piety; which are extolled by ſome to an extravagant Heighth, in order partly to enhance the Worth and Authority of their Writings. Here I will comprehend all that I have to ſay on this Head, in theſe followings Propoſitions.

Firſt, It muſt be acknowledged, that the Lives and Manners of the Primitive Chriſtians, were very Exemplary and Remarkable. The great and viſible Change that was made in their Behaviour, by their Converſion from Paganiſm, is mentioned by *Juſtin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and all the other Apologiſts, with great Admiration. *Lactantius* thus boaſts of the Power and Virtue of the Goſpel, *Da mihi virum qui ſit iracundus*, &c. * "Bring me", ſaith he, "a Man that is addicted to Anger and Paſſion, "and I will make him as gentle as a Lamb; or "let him be covetous, and I will make him boun- "tiful; if he be timorous, he ſhall ſoon become "couragious; or, if he be cruel, he ſhall preſently "be merciful; if unjuſt, he ſhall be made a Man "of ſingular Juſtice and Uprightneſs. Philoſophy "cannot do this", ſaith he, "but Chriſtianity "hath this Force and Vertue to change Mens "Tempers and Converſations". There were frequently viſible Proofs and apparent Examples in

* Inſtitut. *lib.* 3. cap. 26.

thoſe

thoſe Days of this Alteration in Mens Minds and Manners, as ſoon as they took upon them the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. They ſeemed not to be the ſame Perſons that they were before. They became Patterns of all Virtues and Godlineſs, and by the Strictneſs of their Lives, they brought Credit and Honour to the Cauſe of Chriſt, and gained Proſelytes to the Chriſtian Religion.

Theſe holy Servants of God were more eſpecially Eminent, for their Abandoning the abominable Practices of the *Heathens*; for their Abhorrence of all *Idolatry*; for their admirable Chaſtity and Continence; for their Sobriety and Self-denial; for their generous Contempt of the World; for their Simplicity and Honeſty, their affable and courteous Behaviour; for their Faithfulneſs and Integrity; for their mutual Love and Charity; for their Compaſſion to the Diſtreſſed; for the exact Obedience which they paid to the Civil Magiſtrate; for their entire Love and Reverence which they ſhewed to their Paſtors; for their Zeal and Fervency in all Acts of divine Worſhip and Devotion. No Man can ſufficiently admire their Reſolution and Boldneſs, their Courage and Patience under the exquiſite Sufferings which they underwent, their undaunted Conſtancy in profeſſing the Chriſtian Faith, their Praying for their implacable Enemies and Perſecutors.

The firſt Thing they taught their Children, was to confeſs the Lord Jeſus, that as ſoon as they were able, they might trudge to Martyrdom. They boldly faced Death in its moſt ghaſtly and affrighting Shapes, when it came attended with Racks and Gibbets, with Fire and Sword, and the cruelleſt Inſtruments of Death that could be invented. They drowned their Affections to the World in their own Blood. They were zealous for the Croſs; they ruſhed into Torments; they embraced the Stake, and kiſſed their Executioners. They glut-

ted

ted the Rage of their Perſecutors, and the Tormentors were ſooner wearied than the Tormented. Eccleſiaſtical Story affords us many illuſtrious Examples of thoſe who embraced Chriſtianity, upon obſerving this couragious Death of the Martyrs; and particularly *Juſtin* ſaith of himſelf, that this was one Occaſion of his Converſion from Paganiſm to the Chriſtian Religion; namely, his taking notice how the Chriſtian Sufferers were ἄφοβοι πρὸς θάνατον. Apolog. 1. Thus the Chriſtians of thoſe Times were not only noted, for their holy and regular Converſation, and the Unblameableneſs of their Lives, but likewiſe for their Sufferings and Death. Deſervedly, therefore, are their Names and Memories renowned and celebrated to this Day, and ſcarcely any brave Man would decline their Fate, to inherit their Glory. But,

Secondly, Theſe excellent Qualities did not exempt them from *Miſtakes and Errours*. The beſt and holieſt Perſons are not free from theſe. And on the other Hand, the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians, who relate the Hereſies of the Firſt Times, are ſo juſt and impartial, as to own that ſome of the Authors of them were Perſons of Sanctity, and Strictneſs of Manners. One of the Fathers confeſſes, concerning the Hereticks that denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, that their * Lives were wonderfully Exact, though their Doctrines were not to be commended. Piety doth not always make Men throughly Orthodox. They may be very religious, and yet have weak Heads: Their Judgements may fall ſhort of their Sincerity and good Meaning. The moral Endowments of the Firſt Chriſtians, and the moſt Eminent Profeſſors among them, did not extirpate all falſe and miſtaken Notions. Tho'

* Τὸν βίον θαυμάζοντες, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπαινοῦμεν πάντη τὸν λόγον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 44.

they

they were good Men, yea, very bright Examples and Patterns of Virtue, yet they were in the Dark as to ſome particular Points of Doctrine, as I have before proved. As Sanctity frees no Man wholly from Sin, ſo not from Errour. This was the Caſe of the Primitive Chriſtians: Though their Writings are Proofs of their Piety and Zeal for the Cauſe of God and Religion, yet they are likewiſe Teſtimonies of their Errours and Miſtakes.

Thirdly, It cannot be denied, that even their Virtues were tarniſhed; that ſome of them were ſoiled with *Affectation* and *ſuperſtitious Rigour*, and *uncharitable Severity*. *Tertullian*, and ſome other Fathers, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Irenæus*, held, that heinous and notorious Sins committed after Baptiſm, could not be pardoned by the Church upon *Repentance*. They were extravagant in their Praiſes of *Solitude*, of *Faſting*, of *Pilgrimages* and *Penances*. *Jerom* was an excellent Man, and furniſhed with Gifts and Endowments for the Publick Service of the Church, and yet he was ſo vain and ſuperſtitious, as to prefer a *Monaſtick Life* (not without the Suſpicion of Scandal) to the publick Office and Function of a Clergyman. The ſame was done by others, from the fooliſh Opinion they had taken up of an extraordinary Sanctity in that State of Life. But I cannot but obſerve concerning that fore-named excellent Perſon, that though he was an extraordinary Admirer of *Celibacy*, and a *Retired Life*; and though in his *Epiſtles* he is full of paſſionate Perſwaſives, and earneſt Exhortations to embrace *Solitude*, and eſpecially to avoid the Society of the *Female Sex*; yea, though, in an Epiſtle to *Euſtochium*, he blames ſome of the Clergy in thoſe Times, for ſuffering Women to dwell with them in their Houſes; and in his Epiſtle to *Nepotian*, he hath theſe very Words; *Let no Woman come near your Habitations; have no Familiarity with them; talk not with them Face to Face; ſhun whatever*

ever may beget an ill Suſpicion: Yet I cannot, I ſay, but obſerve, that no Man was ſo intimate with the Virgins and Widows as he was. He himſelf owns, that he converſed very familiarly with them. When he retired to *Bethlehem*, he carried *Paula*, and *Euſtochium*, and other Ladies with him, or they ſoon came after him, and dwelt under the ſame Roof: And whilſt he was there, many Women and Maidens frequented his Dwelling. How ſhall we reconcile theſe Things? Are too much *Severity* and too much *Liberty* conſiſtent?

But I mention not this to blacken the Memory of this Great Man, for ſome of the beſt and holieſt Perſons we read of, have, in ſome Part of their Lives, offended in this Kind; but my whole Deſign in bringing this and the like Paſſages on the Stage is, to convince thoſe Perſons of their Miſtake who magnify the *Antients* as the moſt *blameleſs Livers*, in order to repreſent them as the moſt *Orthodox*; as if they could not err, becauſe they were pious: Whereas there are too many Examples to the contrary; and they are very obſtinate who refuſe to own this.

Other *undue Affectations in Morals* might be taken notice of; as that *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in the Second and Third Books of his *Pedagogy*, is too ſcrupulous and preciſe, in ſome things relating to *Converſation* and *Apparel*. He holds it unlawful for young Perſons to drink Wine; and that Chriſtians ought not to uſe either Vocal or Inſtrumental Muſick. *Tertullian*, in his Book of *Idolatry*, will not ſuffer a Chriſtian to be adorned with Purple or Gold, or to wear other Things of the like Nature. He will not allow a Chriſtian to be a *Magiſtrate* or a *Soldier*.

The Antients affected the State of *Celibacy* to a Fault, and *Virginity* was too laviſhly eſteemed by them. Dr. *Cave* in his *Primitive Chriſtianity*, Part II. Chap. 5. ſpeaks very pertinently to this Purpoſe,

poſe, *Indeed it cannot be denied*, ſaith he, *that many of the Antient Fathers*, Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerom, *and others, did inveigh againſt Second Marriages with too much Bitterneſs and Severity, violently preſſing many Paſſages in Scripture to ſerve the Cauſe, ſtraining the String many times 'till it cracked again, and not ſticking to cenſure and condemn Second Marriages as little better than Adultery.* This was expreſsly declared by * *Athenagoras*, one of the Firſt Chriſtian Writers and Fathers, by *Clement of Alexandria*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Greg. Nazianzen*, and ſometimes by *Chryſoſtom.*

St. *Jerom*, in ſeveral Places in his Writings, declares againſt Second Marriages, and expreſsly condemns them; though it is obſervable, that he undertakes to maintain and defend the Second Marriage of *Fabiola* after ſhe was divorced.

Some out of their pious Zeal againſt *worſhiping of Images*, diſapproved the very Making of any Kind of Image or Picture; they condemned all Painting, Sculpture, and Carving, as we read in *Clem. Alexand. Strom.* lib. 5. *Tertullian de Idololatriâ*, cap. 3. *Origen. cont. Celſ.* lib. 4. *Chryſoſt.* Hom. 49. in St. *Matth.*

Their Sobriety and Moderation ran out ſometimes into *needleſs Severities. Origen* literally underſtood our Saviour's Words about *Eunuchs*, and was guilty of an unwarrantable Act of Rigour on his own Body. And moſt of the Firſt Chriſtians affected undue Auſterities, and were Tyrannical and Uſurping in requiring of rigid Penances. Some of them diſciplined their Bodies with inhuman Hardſhips. *Simeon Stylites* was always tied by the Leg to a Pillar with a great iron Chain, and he never ſtirred from that Place. An other ſtood all his Days in a Ditch, and fed on nothing but Barley

* Δεύτερος γάμος εὐπρεπὴς ἐστὶ μοιχεία. Apolog. pro Chriſtianis.

and

and Pulſe, and thence purchaſed the Name of Κεβόφαγος, *the BarlyEater*. And ſeveral other Examples of ſtrange and unaccountable *Auſterities* we may read in *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, and other Church Hiſtorians, who tell us diſmal Stories of *Hermites* and *Anchorets*, that inhabited in Cells and Dens in the Wilderneſs, and under Pretence of ſaving their Souls, abuſed and injured their Bodies.

Some of the Primitive Chriſtians were too nice and ſhye in the Matter of *Oaths*, holding it abſolutely unlawful to ſwear at all, quoting that Text, *Matt.* v. 34. Some of them placed no ſmall Sanctity in *vain* and *ſuperfluous Rites*, of which afterwards. *Tertullian* allowed not of Flying in time of Perſecution. Some ſollicited and courted the Heathen Magiſtrates to inflict Puniſhment on them, and even to take away their Lives, ſo greedy they were to be Martyrs. Sometimes they diſpatched themſelves with their own Hands, to avoid the Fury of the Enemy. This can be interpreted to be no other than imprudent, raſh, and unjuſtifiable Zeal. Thus their Vertues were not ſo entire and pure as ſome have repreſented them.

Fourthly, It cannot be concealed that they were not wholly free from *Common Vices*, from the actual Miſcarriages and Diſorders of the Times they lived in. I here draw a Veil over the *more particular* and *perſonal* Failings of ſome of the moſt pious (as well as Learned) Fathers; and the rather becauſe they have, in their own Writings, been ſo humble and penitent as to confeſs them to the World: Far be it from me therefore, to bring them now upon the Stage. We ought to reverence their Memories, and to own their ſingular Virtues, and to remember, that ſome of them laid down their Lives in Defence of the Goſpel, and were honoured with a Crown of Martyrdom. But they were but Men, and in ſeveral Reſpects ſuch as others are.

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The *Fidelity* and *Sincerity* of ſome of thoſe Firſt Writers are not exceſſive, when they grapple with their Adverſaries; for they ſometimes induſtriouſly miſtake them, to render them the more obnoxious, and to get the Victory over them. Sometimes they ſtick not to ſacrifice ſome Parts of the Bible to their own Fancy and Prejudice. They ſeem to make no Conſcience of wreſting ſome Texts from their plain and genuine Meaning: And *Jerom* is ſo vain as to think, that ſome of the Inſpired Writers do ſo too. More than once (as may be ſeen in his Comments on *Iſaiah*, *Joel*, *Micah*, the firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*), he aſſerts, that the Penmen of the New Teſtament willfully miſrepreſent the Senſe of ſeveral Paſſages in the Old Teſtament which they quote. But eſpecially he charges St. *Paul* with this Fault in his Epiſtles to the *Romans*, *Galatians*, *Epheſians*. Videbitis eum in teſtimoniis quæ habet de Veteri Teſtamento quàm Prudens, quàm Diſſimulator ſit ejus quod agit. *Apolog. adv. Rufinum.* That is, *The Apoſtle, in his Quotations in theſe Epiſtles, acts like a prudent Diſſembler.* He ſticks not to affirm, that when St. *Paul* ſaith, *He withſtood Peter to the Face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, (Gal. ii. 11.) "this is not ſpoken ſincerely, but diſſemblingly and "hypocritically"; and on this Occaſion this Father *commends Diſſimulation*; Comment. in loc.

Every conſiderate Reader thinks, that the Lives of *Paul* the firſt Hermit, and of thoſe other Anchorets *Anthony* and *Hilarion*, written by *Jerom*, are mixed with fabulous Narrations, to magnify the Merit of that Sort of Life. This Writer loves to ſhew himſelf witty and facetious, and to make Sport for thoſe he writes to, even in ſerious Matters. He ſometimes forgets what he hath written, or thinks it no Crime to claſh with himſelf. In one of his Epiſtles to *Euſtochium*, to diſſuade her from reading profane Authors, as *Tully*, *Plautus*, &c. he tells her in a very ſolemn Manner, that he

was called up to the Heavenly Tribunal, and was whipt by an Angel, for reading thoſe Authors; and he tells *Euſtochium* that this was a Reality, and no Dream: But he changed his Tone afterwards, when *Rufinus* objected to him, that he had not left off reading ſuch Authors; for he tells him that there was no ſuch Thing in Reality, and that it was but a *Dream*.

The Antient Writers ſometimes conceal their true Sentiments, and ſay what the preſent Neceſſity, not the real Truth, requires: Which is the Confeſſion of * *Jerom* concerning ſeveral of the Fathers: And in the ſame Place he owns, that they ſtudy to ſpeak like Orators and Rhetoricians, not like ſtrict Obſervers of Truth: Which ſhews that they are reſolved at any Rate to defend their Cauſe. Thus *Faithfulneſs*, *Honeſty*, and *Integrity*, which are very commendable Moral Qualifications in a Writer, ſeemed to be wanting ſometimes in ſome of thoſe Antients.

* Epiſt. 50, ad Pammach.

CHAP. VI.

NOR were they without great Failings in their *Practices*, which were *more viſible*. Inſomuch, that in the Third Century, the Looſeneſs of Manners, eſpecially among the Clergy, and the Want of ſtrict Diſcipline in the Church, were a great Motive that prevailed with *Tertullian* to favour the *Montaniſts*, who pretended to great Auſterity. Who hath not heard of the *unchriſtian Quarrels* between *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome* and the *Aſian Churches*, about the Keeping of *Eaſter*; and between *Stephen* another *Roman* Pontiff, and *Cyprian* Biſhop

Biſhop of *Carthage*, about Rebaptization, which were the Occaſion of moſt indecent Language, Calumnies, Reproaches, Slanders towards each other? We have heard of the diſagreeing Conduct about *receiving the Lapſed.* I am inclined to believe, that the Remiſsneſs of Diſcipline in the *African* Churches, was the Occaſion and Root of the *Novatian Schiſm*, called ſo from *Novatus*, a Presbyter of *Carthage*, who could not brook the licentious Manners that were tolerated in the Church, and thereupon ſeparated from its Communion, and grew factious and inſolent.

All Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians ſpeak of the *Contentions* and *Diviſions* that were in thoſe Times; ſo that one would wonder to read what a great Man of our Church ſaith, namely, * That *all Things*, in *thoſe Firſt Ages, were peaceable and quiet, and as different, as poſſibly can be, from the perverſe and reſtleſs Clamours and Contentions of this Age.* (He means the Age he lived in). Whereas this learned Writer, who was well acquainted with thoſe Firſt Times, knew that they were ſcandalous for the Feuds and Animoſities, the Controverſies and intemperate Zeal, which then reigned. Accordingly it is obſerved by the learned *Prefacer* before the Tranſlation of *Du Pin's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, ſpeaking of thoſe Firſt Times of the Church, That *Diviſions ran as high, and were as eagerly managed as ever they have been ſince.* I could here add, that in the Third Century, in the Time of Perſecution under the Emperor *Decius*, St. *Cyprian* (Epiſt. 37.) freely acknowledges, that the Rage and Fury of the Enemy was juſtly deſerved, by reaſon of the *Pride* and *Faction*, and *diſorderly Lives* of the Chriſtians, yea, even of ſome of the Martyrs themſelves. In thoſe Times the Clergy left their Flocks, to purſue ſome ſecular and world-

* Dr. *Cave* Epiſt. Ded. ante Hiſt. Literar.

ly Deſigns; as * *Cyprian* tells us, and aſſigns it as one of the great Cauſes of the Perſecution which God ſuffered to be brought on the Churches in his Time. And *Euſebius* ſaith the like, with Reference to the Perſecution under *Diocleſian*; * *There were*, ſaith he, *mutual Envyings and Revilings among us; the Rulers of the Church fell out with one an other, the Paſtors of the Flock foſtered Strife and Contention, ſtudying nothing but Emulation and Hatred.* And a great deal more of the ſame Nature the Reader will meet with there.

Then in the Fourth Century, we are told what *horrid Cruelties, Ravages, Outrages, and Barbarities* were committed, during the Controverſy between the *Catholicks* and the *Arians*, ſuch Barbarities as Pagans would ſcarcely be guilty of. There was hardly any thing of Concord, and Peace, and Good Will, even among the great Doctors and Profeſſors. *Donatus* raiſed a Faction in the *African* Churches: The *Novatian* Schiſm was not quelled even in the Beginning of this Century: *Meletius* the Biſhop of *Thebais*, was an Eccleſiaſtical Mutineer in *Egypt*: The Church at *Antioch* was divided and diſtracted, becauſe of the Baniſhment of *Euſtathius* their Biſhop: In the Churches at *Conſtantinople* and *Alexandria*, there were Eccleſiaſtick Feuds, as *Theodoret*, *Socrates*, and *Sozomen* tell us. In *Rome*, in *Armenia*, in *Arabia*, there were religious Factions.

Baſil the Great frequently in his Epiſtles repreſents the diſturbed and confuſed State of the Church, cauſed even by the Orthodox themſelves, whom he ſtiles *Wolves in Sheeps clothing*. He complains of Errour and Sedition every where, and the Miſeries and Calamities that were the Conſe-

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* *Epiſcopi, derelicta cathedrâ, plebe deſertâ, per alienas provincias oberrantes, negotiationis quæſtuoſæ nundinas aucupari.* De Lapſis, Sect. 4.

† Hiſt. Eccl. *lib.* 18. *cap.* 1.

quences

quences of them. *Gregory Nazianzen*, in his *Panegyrick* on *Athanaſius*, tells us *, that "the Lan-
"guage of Contention and Contradiction, like ſome
"terrible and malignant Diſtemper, was broken into
"the Church, and Garrulity and Babbling paſt for
"Learning". He, in other Places, gives us a frightful Repreſentation of thoſe Times; he deplores the Factions and Cabals that were among Churchmen; their falſe Ordinations; their tumultuous Elections; their uſurped Biſhopricks; their groundleſs Excommunications and Deprivations: And he every where inveighs againſt the Ignorance, Pride, Luxury, and other Vices of the Biſhops of that Age.

Particularly in his *Apologetick Oration*, with a becoming Paſſion and Zeal, he deſcribes and laments the Corruptions and Enormities of the Churchmen in his Days, and tells us, that "*The very Name of*
"*a Prieſt was a Reproach:* He there complains
"of thoſe, who with ſacrilegious Hands and a pro-
"fane Spirit approach the ſacred Myſteries, and
"are ambitious of obtaining the Epiſcopal Dignity,
"though they were not fit to come near what is
"Holy: They would climb up to the Biſhop's
"Chair, that they may live in Eaſe and Idleneſs.
"They minded not their Function, but only Domi-
"nion and Grandeur. This domineering Spirit",
he ſaith, "never reigned more in the Church than
"it did at that Time". In his 41ſt Oration, he expoſes the Biſhops of great Cities as Worldly-minded, Avaritious, Luxurious, *&c.* In his firſt Poem, he flies out with great Vehemency againſt the Evil Lives of the Prelates of that Age, and particularly their Arrogancy and Pride, their Ambition and Love of the World. In his 10th Poem

* Ἡ ἀνλίθε[illegible] γλῶσσα, ὥσπερ τι νόσημα δεινὸν καὶ κακοήθες, τὰς ἐκκλησίας ἡμῶν εἰσερθάρη. καὶ ἡ φλυαρία παίδευσις ἔδοξε.

and ſome others, he rebukes them for their Hypocriſy and other Vices.

At the Beginning of the fifth Century, the Eccleſiaſticks ſhewed themſelves hot and fiery, factious and ſeditious in the Affair of *Meletius*, *Paulinus*, and *Vitalis*, who all three pretended to the Biſhoprick of *Antioch*, and by theſe contrary Pretenſions tore in Pieces that famous Church. Here I forbear to mention ſeveral Inſtances, leſt I ſhould be thought to aggravate theſe Matters; but I will produce one only, and that in the Words of a learned and pious * Prelate of our own Church; "What Quarrels", ſaith he, "aroſe at the "Second Council of *Epheſus*, between *Cyrill of* "*Alexandria* and *John of Antioch*? The Churches "under both ſtuck not to counter-thunder Ana"thema's one againſt an other: Thereupon *Theo*"*doret* thruſt in his Sickle, and accuſed *Cyrill* of "Apollinariſm, *Cyrill* accuſes *Theodoret* of Neſto"rianiſm. The Flame of their Rage broke out "more and more, and almoſt drew the Chriſtian "World to Parties, *&c*". Such was the Temper of ſome of the beſt Men of thoſe Times. The Churchmen were now very defective in their Duty, and ſcandalous in their Lives, which puſhed on that pious Father St. *Chryſoſtom* to reprove them with ſome Severity. In his Books *of the Prieſthood*, he excellently ſets forth the Dignity of the Function, but, at the ſame time, takes notice of the ſhameful Miſcarriages of many of that Character, which gained him the Odium of the Perſons of that Order. St. *Jerom* met with the ſame Uſage and Treatment from the Clergy, becauſe he reflected with ſome Smartneſs on their ill Behaviour. And we find it obſerved, and complained of, that the Eccleſiaſticks at *Rome* bore Envy and Hatred to

* Biſhop *Hall*'s Serm. before the Convocation.

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thoſe who were Eminent for their Learning and Piety, and who urged the Reformation of Manners, and called upon their Brethren to walk agreeably to the Rules and Orders of their Function. St. *Jerom*, in his Letter to *Nepotian*, complains of thoſe Clergymen who make *Merchandize of the Church's Goods*, and grow proud and inſolent, as ſoon as they become rich and wealthy. We learn from St. *Iſidore's* Letters, (which are of great Repute among the Learned) that Simony was common among the Clergy; that Ordinations were bought and ſold, and great Exactions were uſed upon that Account; that the Monks were extremely vicious and Lewd in their Manners; that the Biſhops were Lordly and Tyrannical; that they were noted for their Pride, and for their Avarice.

And if the Clergy, in the Firſt Times of the Church, were ſo blameable, we are not to wonder that the *Laity* trod in their Steps: And this thoſe Antient Writers were not backward to confeſs, to proclaim, and heartily to lament. The Anniverſaries of the Martyrs were celebrated with exceſſive Mirth and Riot, and even with Drunkenneſs. The *Agapæ*, or Love-Feaſts, of the firſt Chriſtians ſoon degenerated into Intemperance and Profuſeneſs. Both Men and Women were vain and immodeſt in their Habits; eſpecially, the Expenſiveneſs, Pride, and Prodigality of the Latter are mentioned and ſeverely checked by three of the Antient Fathers of the Church, * *Clemens of Alexandria*, † *Tertullian*, and ‖ *Cyprian*. The firſt of theſe complains, that the Chriſtians were extravagantly curious and ſuperfluous in their Apparel, and in the Furniture of their Houſes. The Laſt of them tells us, that even thoſe who made a Reſolution to keep their

* Pædag. Lib. 3. cap. 2.

† De cult. fœm. l. 1. c. 8. & l. 2. c. 3, 4. De hab. mulierum, cap 9.

‖ De Diſciplina & hab. Virg.

Virginity were as Vain and Modiſh in their Dreſſes and Ornaments as others. The Pretence of living a ſingle Life was ſometimes found to be a Cheat, for they ſcandalouſly converſed with the Deacons, as we learn from a Letter among St. *Cyprian*'s Writings, on which Mr. *Dodwell* hath a particular Diſſertation. The Synod in that Father's Time that condemned the Practice of Women *cum Viris iiſque Clericis concumbentium*, is a Proof of the diſorderly and impure Converſation that was allowed by ſome of the Clergy with that Sex. Afterwards we hear great Complaints againſt them both, and eſpecially againſt the latter, *Baſil* in his *Orations* and *Homilies* expoſes their Faults, their Pride, Laſciviouſneſs, Immodeſty, Wanton Dancing, Singing, Meretricious Garbs, *&c.* and even their coming to Church to entice young Men.

I might before have mentioned the *Traditores*, who were thoſe Chriſtians who cowardly delivered up their Bibles to the Perſecutors to be burnt. Others of them, who are commonly called *Libellatici* procured Certificates under the Hands of the Heathen Officers that they had worſhipped Idols, though they had not. Others actually ſacrificed to the Heathen Idols, and renounced Chriſtianity. This was a common Fault in the Primitive Times.

Afterwards in the ſucceeding Age Faction and Sedition, and even Slaughter and Bloodſhed ſometimes attended the Election of Biſhops. *Gregory Nazianzen* in his *Apologetick Oration* complains that "Charity was baniſhed, that Impudence and Im-"piety prevailed every where, that all that was "Sacred was trampled upon and prophaned, Lying "and defaming were Epidemick Vices, that there "was no Fear of God before Mens Eyes; and "that which aggravated the Iniquity was, that "the *Prieſts* were equally guilty with the *People*". In an other * Place he deplores the particular Sins

* Orat. 15.

that

that his People were to be charged with at that time, "namely, their Forgetfulneſs of God, their "Neglect of hearing their Preachers, their Un-"charitableneſs, their Oppreſſion of the Poor, their "Covetouſneſs, their profuſe Vanity in their Ap-"parel and in their Houſhold-ſtuff and Moveables." And in his ſixty third Poem he condemns the pompous and ſumptuous Garb of ſome Chriſtian Women at that time.

The ſame doth *Jerom* in the Life of *Paul the Hermit*; and the like is done by *Chryſoſtom* in his fourth Homily on the firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, and in other Places of his Writings. Out of his Homilies alone we may inform ourſelves, that the Chriſtians of thoſe Times frequented the Interludes and Spectacles of the Heathens, and made them their great Delight; that they affected to be Modiſh and Fantaſtick in their Habits; that they were very indevout in their Behaviour in the Publick Aſſemblies; that whilſt the Sermon was preaching, yea in the Time of the Prayers they walked up and down, and they laughed aloud and were merry; that upon Feſtival Days they indulged themſelves in Luxury; that the Maids and Wives were immodeſt; that they kept no Decorum in their Manners; that they were wanton in the Churches, and even at the Euchariſt.

That the Church in thoſe Days had a vaſt Number of *Offenders*, and ſome of them of the higheſt Nature, we may gather from the Relations which are ſo frequent in the Fathers about the *Diſcipline* exerciſed on thoſe Offenders, and the various Degrees of *Penance*. Likewiſe the *Canons*, that were made by Councils for the regulating of Mens Manners and redreſſing Abuſes, let us know what were the Maladies of thoſe Times. We are informed thence that great Numbers of Chriſtians were debauched and profligate, and indulged themſelves in all manner of Vice.

This

This corrects the vulgar Errour (yea, and which hath been eſpouſed even by very Learned Men) that the firſt Profeſſors of Chriſtianity were the Exacteſt Livers that ever were. From what I have faithfully ſet down it is manifeſt, that thoſe Times were not ſo free from Vice as ſome have imagined. Thoſe Old Chriſtians were not all of them Saints. The Antient Records of the Church inform us, that not only Errours and Hereſies, but Immoral Practices were rife in the firſt Ages. And 'tis certain that we have had many thouſands of Chriſtians ſince that time, who in their Lives have ſhewn a more Even and Regular Piety. There have been many hundreds of Fathers and other Divines and Clergymen of our Own Church, who come not behind the *Antients*, as in their Knowledge, ſo in their Strictneſs of Life. So that to make theſe latter more knowing and Learned, more religious and devout, and more exact in their Manners than they really were, is to corrupt the Faith and Truth of Hiſtory, to miſrepreſent the plaineſt Matters of Fact, and to impoſe upon the World in an Affair that may eaſily be confuted.

To conclude: The laying open the Frailties of any of the Firſt Chriſtians is a Task that I moſt unwillingly took upon me; I ſhould rather have choſen to expatiate in their Praiſes: But I have been forced, againſt my Inclination, to perform this Office, becauſe ſome Men have extravagantly extolled theſe Antients and their Writings, which I conceive is very detrimental to Our Religion. That therefore which I have ſaid under this Head, may be ſerviceable to abate the exceſſive Veneration which ſome are wont to pay to the Chriſtians of the Antient Times, and more particularly to the Writers of thoſe Days. I have proved that there is no Ground for this, and that we are not to look upon them as the Standard of our Belief or Practice.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

III. IF we conſider well how great a Part of the Fathers Writings is taken up in *Needleſs Rites* and *Ceremonies*, which ſerve only to debaſe and corrupt the Native Simplicity of the Chriſtian Religon, we ſhall not be inclined to be extravagant in our Eſteem of thoſe Authors. In the Writings of *Baſil the Great*, and the two *Gregories*, and *Epiphanius* we meet with ſeveral Strictures of Superſtitious Innovations that were crept into the Church in thoſe Times, and *Baſil* takes notice of ſome of them as *Innovations.* St. *Cyprian* was a very good and holy Man, and zealous for Religion, but he fills every Page almoſt with Harangues on Order and Diſcipline, which he makes to conſiſt too much in Things indifferent, mean and inconſiderable. In the *Catechetical* Diſcourſes of *Cyrill of Jeruſalem* are mentioned Prayers for the Dead, Invocation of Saints, Chriſm, Celebacy of the Clergy, a Real Sacrifice on the Altar, Worſhiping of Relicks, and moſt of the Ceremonies of the Maſs. So that what *Cyprian* ſaid of his Times was ſtill true of thoſe afterwards, *Ad hoc malorum devoluta eſt Eccleſia Dei & Sponſa Chriſti, ut ad celebranda Sacramenta cæleſtia diſciplinam Lux de Tenebris mutuetur, & id faciant Chriſtiani quod Antichriſti faciunt.* Epiſt. ad Pomp. "It is the unhappy "State of the Church of Chriſt, that in the Cele- "brating of the ſacred and heavenly Myſteries, Light "borrows Rules and Orders from Darkneſs itſelf, "and Chriſtians do the very ſame thing that Anti- "chriſtians do".

Other moſt Celebrated Fathers of the Firſt Ages of Chriſtianity fill their Books with ſuch Uſages and Practices as theſe; namely, *Deferring their Baptiſm 'till Old Age, or the Approach of Death*; *Looking*

Looking towards the Weſt when they were baptized; *Uſing Milk and Honey at Baptiſm*; *Anointing thoſe that were baptized*; *Celebrating this Sacrament only at Eaſter and Whitſuntide*; *Uſing of holy or conſecrated Water*; *Waſhing before they came to their publick Worſhip*; *Praying ſtanding every Lord's Day*; *Obſerving of Saturday as well as Sunday*; *Uſing Water as well as Wine in the Euchariſt*; *Giving this Sacrament to Infants and Children, and Men that were dead*; *The Carrying of the Bread and Wine home to the Well and to the Sick, and keeping them in their Houſes a long time*; *Bowing and Worſhipping towards the Eaſt*; *Making the Sign of the Croſs at all Seaſons*; *Praying with Hands lifted up and ſtretched out in Form of a Croſs*; *Setting up of Lamps and Torches in Churches*; *The Orders of Acolythi, Exorciſts, Door-keepers*, &c.

Uſing of Salt and Spittle at Baptiſm is as old as *Origen* (*Homil.* 6. *in Ezek.*), *Ambroſe* (*ad cap.* 22. *Luc.*), *Auguſtine* (*Confeſſ. l.* 1. *c.* 4.) Exorciſms and Suffiation before Baptiſm, and at other Times, were uſed in all the *Eaſtern* Churches; (as *Juſtin Martyr*, *Cyril of Jeruſalem*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Theodoret*, and ſeveral Councils teſtify), and in the *Weſtern* ones, (as *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtine*, aſſure us). Moſt of the Antient Fathers ſpeak of Chriſm at Baptiſm, at Confirmation, and at Ordination of Biſhops and Prieſts. *Jerom* relates (*ad Vigilant. cap.* 3.) that in all the Eaſtern Churches they ſet up lighted Candles or Lamps at the reading of the Goſpel. *Damaſcen* was a great Advocate for Images to be uſed in a Religious Way, and for the Veneration to be payed to the Relicks of Saints; *Orthod. fid. lib.* 4. *Auguſtin* complains in one of his Epiſtles that the Ceremonies in his Time were as numerous and burthenſome as thoſe under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation. All or moſt of theſe Rites and Practices are reckoned, by a very Learned Man of our Church whom I have often quoted, under

under *Primitive Chriſtianity*, and are thereby recommended to our Practice in this Age; though none of them are recommended to us by the Judgement or Practice of the Apoſtles: Not one of them do we meet with in their Writings; but they were all of them introduced by the Corruption and Degeneracy of the Times after the Apoſtles.

Thus we are impoſed upon by this Common Cheat, That the Primitive Chriſtians did thus and thus, and therefore we are obliged to do as they did. The Doctors of the *Roman* Church delude thoſe of their Communion after this very manner, not letting them know that there were Early Abuſes and Corruptions in the Church, that theſe had infected the Minds of Men betimes, and that the Writings of the Antients were not only defective in themſelves, but, were made worſe by Ignorant Tranſcribers and Deſigning Impoſtors. What Certaintly then is there in the Writings of the Fathers? And to what purpoſe are we called upon by ſome Men to make them our Patterns? Truly our own Excellent Church hath as good as told us, that ſhe is not an Admirer of theſe Rites and Practices which the Writings of the Fathers, even the antienteſt of them, commend to us; for if they were of any Authority and Weight, ſhe would have enjoyned us the Obſervance of them, and ordered us not to vary from them. But ſhe hath done no ſuch thing, yea, ſhe takes no notice of them.

If theſe Rites and Uſages, with which the Fathers Writings abound, are fit to be imitated and practiſed by us, then why don't we uſe Milk and Honey, and Exorciſing, and Anointing in Baptiſm? Why don't we croſs our ſelves and all the Parts of our Bodies when we go about any Work? Why don't we celebrate the Lord's Supper on Saturdays as well as Sundays? Why don't we give this Sacrament to Infants, and even to the Deceaſed? Why don't we uſe Water with Wine in the Eucha-

Euchariſtick Cup? Why don't we pray on the Lord's Day ſtanding, and not kneeling? Why have we not *Monks*, according to Antient Practice, and the Relations given us by the Fathers, who tell us that the Clergy were generally taken out of that Body of Men? Why have we not Sub-deacons, Acolythi, Exorciſts, Readers, Door-keepers, *who were ſet apart to their reſpective Offices by ſolemn Rites of Prayer, and Impoſition of Hands*, ſaith Dr. *Cave*. I might mention here, that the Habit which was worn by the Clergy was a Cloak, that Preaching in the Primitive Times was performed by the Biſhop only; and it was a Cuſtom in the *African* Church, that no Prieſt ſhould preach in the preſence of the Biſhop: St. *Auguſtine* was the firſt that was permitted to do otherwiſe. *Socrates* and *Sozomen* tell us that the Biſhops monopolized this Office in ſome Countries. Why then do we ſwerve from the Primitive Pattern: Why do we at this day trample upon the Authority of the Antient Church by every Sermon we preach? In a word, Why have we not all the other Practices and Ceremonies which I before recited, if Primitive Uſage ought to prevail with us.

Wherefore one that reads Dr. *Cave*'s Book of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, would be apt to think that he deſigned it as a *Reproach* to our Church, to upbraid and expoſe her for not following the Primitive Example. It is certain that ſhe teſtifies by her Practice, that ſhe hath no regard to what thoſe Antient Writers record concerning thoſe foreſaid Rites. It is plain that ſhe doth not think the Fathers to be Authentick and Authoritative in thoſe Matters, for ſhe obſerves none of them, though the Fathers tell us that theſe Uſages were derived from the very *Apoſtles*, aud came down from them by the Current of *Tradition*. We don't practice according to this Antient Model; and why? becauſe it conſiſts of Needleſs and Superſtitious

ſtitious Ceremonies, and ſome of them freakiſh and enthuſiaſtick, wholly diſagreeable to the Purity and Simplicity of the Goſpel, and the true Apoſtolical Spirit. A Learned Prelate will tell you the Date of them; *Theſe Abuſes and Corruptions in the Church*, ſaith he, *came in by the Coolings of the firſt Heats of Chriſtianity, and the Increaſe of Intereſt, and the Abatement of Chriſtian Simplicity, when the Church's Fortune grew better, and her Sons grew worſe, and ſome of her Fathers worſt of all.* Thus Biſhop *Taylor*, Epiſt. Ded. before his *Liberty of Propheſying*. Eſpecially after *Conſtantine the Great*'s Time the Church apparently degenerated; *when the Beauty of Preferment ſhone full in the Eyes of the Preachers, then Abuſes came pouring in amain, as* * *one who hath a Kindneſs for ſome of theſe Abuſes ingenuouſly confeſſes.*

We have no Reaſon then to conſult the Fathers in order to knowing from them what Ceremonies we are to uſe, for thoſe which they maintain in their Writings were the Fruit of the Degenerate State of the Church in thoſe Days. The plain Truth is, that the Chriſtians in the firſt Ages grew wanton, and played with their Religion, and not content with what the holy Evangeliſts and Apoſtles preſcribed them, they fondly invented and introduced New Rites and Practices, ſome *Jewiſh*, ſome *Gentile*; and then they and their Followers were ſo ſilly as to call theſe *Primitive Chriſtianity*, and the Religion of the Apoſtles. But no ſober-minded Men can think, that theſe Rites prevailed in the Church of Chriſt in the Times of its greateſt Purity. It ſeems to me rational to believe, that if theſe Rites and Ceremonies were of any conſiderable Value and Concern, they would have been enjoined us by the Apoſtles. If theſe were acceptable to God, and

* Mr. *Reeve's* Pref. concerning the Right Uſe of the Fathers, *p.* 81.

were

were Parts of our Religion, and were conducible to Virtue and Holineſs, Scripture ſurely would have given us ſome notice of it. But the plain Truth is, the eager affecting and ſetting up of theſe Ceremonies contributed towards the debauching the Morals of Men, and corrupting the very Vitals of Chriſtianity. It is obſervable, that the more degenerate the Churches grew in the ſeveral Centuries, the more Zealous they were in outward Rites and Obſervations, and unneceſſary Badges of Religion; and as the Veneration of thoſe Rites and Human Traditions increaſed, ſo proportionably the Strictneſs of Life and Manners decreaſed. I will add, that though ſome of them were at firſt Innocent and Harmleſs, yet afterwards they were uſed to ſuperſtitious Ends, and became inconvenient and dangerous, and therefore are juſtly to be laid aſide. To contend for them now is mere Perverſeneſs and Obſtinacy, and a downright ſlighting of the Sacred Writings of the New Teſtament, where we read of no ſuch Things.

CHAP. VIII.

IV. WE ſhall not be forward to overvalue the Writings of theſe Antient Penmen, when we find, and even in thoſe very Writings, that there was *no Agreement* or *Uniformity* in the Chriſtian Churches about thoſe Rites before mentioned, and about *other Modes* of *Worſhip* and *Forms of Diſcipline* and *Government*, in theſe Times which they ſpeak of. It is frequently granted by that foreſaid Author, who drew up the Account of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, that the Uſages of the Chriſtians, as to the Manner of Religious Worſhip in Publick, *often varied according to Time and Place.* He that hath read *Tertullian*'s Treatiſe *de Velandis Virginibus*, and

and *Cyprian's Epiſtles*, and thoſe that were written to him, can't but be convinced that there was a great Diverſity of Cuſtoms in the Chriſtian Churches in thoſe Times. From the fierce Debate about the Keeping of *Eaſter*, 'tis plain that there were Different Cuſtoms in the firſt and earlieſt Churches; for (as was obſerved before) the Eaſtern Churches kept it at one time, and the Weſtern at an other; but they both pretended that they received thoſe Cuſtoms from their Anceſtors, as much as to ſay, from the Apoſtles. How then can we determine our ſelves, as to the Obſervance of that Feſtival, from what the Antient Chriſtians did? for we ſee that the *Aſiatick* Biſhops and Churches were as numerous and conſiderable as thoſe of *Rome* and other Weſtern Parts; and indeed neither of the Obſervances hath any Foundation on the Inſpired Writings.

The Clergy were forbad to enter into a Conjugal State by the Laws of the Weſtern Church, but not ſo by thoſe of the Eaſtern. "*Baptiſm* is not to be "adminiſtered by Deacons", ſaid ſome of the Fathers. "*They are not intruſted (ſaith *Epiphanius*) "with the Celebration of any Myſteries, but they "are only allowed to Aſſiſt at the Celebration". †Others allow them to perform that Office.

So as to the other Sacrament, *Juſtin Martyr* informs us, that the Deacon diſtributed the Bread and Wine: "§Thoſe, (ſaith he) who are called "Deacons among us give unto every one that is "preſent Bread and Wine and Water, to be received "by them, which are conſecrated with giving of

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* Οὔτε Διάκονοι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλεσιασικῇ τάξει ἐπισεύθησάν τι μυσήριον ἐπίσελεῖν, ἀλλὰ μόνον διακονεῖν τὰ ἐπίσελόμενα. Hær. 75.

† Tertull. de Baptiſmo, cap. 17. Chryſoſt. Hom. 61. Tom 7. Theodoret. Queſt. 1. in 2 lib. Paralip.

§ Οἱ καλέμενοι παρ' ἡμῖν Διάκονοι διδόασιν ἑκάσῳ τῶν παρόνων μελαλαβεῖν ἀπὸ τᾶ εὐχαρισηθέν(Θ ἄρς κ) ὄινυ, κ) ὕδα(Θ. Apol. 2.

 "Thanks".

"Thanks". But in the *African* Churches it was otherwiſe, for *Cyprian* mentions only the § Wine diſtributed by the Deacons. But from *Tertullian* we learn, that even in the *African* Churches the Deacons were not permitted to deliver the Wine, this belonging to the Biſhop only: *Nec de aliorum manu quàm præſidentium ſumimus.* De Coronâ milit.

The *Readers* and *Subdeacons* are reckoned ſometimes by *Cyprian* in the Number of Clergyman, but at other times not; as Mr. *Dodwell* hath rightly obſerved in his *Diſſertation* on that Father's Writings.

What the Office of *Deaconeſſes* was, and whether they were Eccleſiaſtical or Lay Perſons, is not clear from the Writings of the Fathers; there are Arguments brought on both Sides.

In the Primitive Times Some received the Sacrament every day, as *Cyprian* (*de Orat. Dom.*) and *Baſil* (*Epiſt.* 289.) teſtify; but this was not a General Uſage. In the Eaſtern Churches they received the Sacrament ſtanding (*Cyril. Catech. Myſt.*) but not ſo in the Weſtern. The Communicants received the Bread into the Hollow of their Right Hand, holding their Left Hand under their Right in Form of a Croſs, ſaith the ſame Writer. The Biſhop laid his Hands acroſs on the Head of the Perſon whom he Confirmed. And thus I could mention ſeveral other Particular and Peculiar Cuſtoms uſed in the Primitive Ages.

The *Baptiſm of Infants* was in ſome meaſure left uncertain, and the Practice of it was neglected by the moſt Eminent Upholders of Chriſtianity. *Conſtantine the Great* was not baptized 'till the Year before he died: And ſome other Emperors followed his Example: Yea, ſome of the Chief Fathers of the Primitive Church, as *Ambroſe*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, and others, put off this Sacra-

§ Solemnibus adimpletis Calicem adferre Diaconus præſentibus cœpit. *Serm. 5. de lapſis.*

ment

ment 'till they were arrived to a conſiderable Age. It ſeems it was not agreed in thoſe Times that *Pædo-baptiſm* was neceſſary in the Church. *Tertullian* diſapproves of it in his Treatiſe *de Baptiſmo*, cap. 18. where he declares it to be his Judgement, that thoſe to whom the Sacrament of Baptiſm is adminiſtered ought to have attained to ſome meaſure of Knowledge, and conſequently to ſome Ripeneſs of Years. *Gregory Nazianzen* (*Orat.* 40.) ſaith the ſame, and adviſes to defer Baptiſm, for which he is unadviſedly cenſured by a * late Writer as *an Ignorant Man, and one of very mean Capacities.*

As to *Faſting*, among the *Greek* Churches Wedneſdays and Fridays were obſerved; but among the *Latin* ones Friday and Saturday, as *Clement of Alexandria* Strom. l. 7. and *Tertullian* de Jejun. cap. 2, 3. teſtify. If we ſpeak of the Yearly Faſt before *Eaſter*, which we call the *Lent*-Faſt, we can't ſatisfy our ſelves from the Writings of the Antients what was the *Foundation* of obſerving it. Some ground it on our Saviour's faſting forty Days: Others make it a Preparation to the adminiſtering of Baptiſm, which was always at *Eaſter*. Others ſay it was deſigned to be a Memorial of Chriſt's Paſſion: Others will have it to be a Preparative to the celebrating of the Sacrament of the Euchariſt. Thus the Fathers diſagree in the Grounds and Occaſions of the Lent-Faſt. And they differ as much about the Extent of it, that is, the Number of the Days and Weeks of Faſting. One of the Antients (*Socrates*) tells us, that the *Roman* Chriſtians faſted but three Weeks before *Eaſter*, but the *Greek* Churches added three Weeks more. *Euſebius* (Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 26.) from *Irenæus* ſaith, concerning the Paſchal Faſt, that Some thought they were obliged to faſt but one day; others two, others more, and others forty Days.

* Mr. *Wall*, in his Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm.

A Learned Father declares, that * he doth not find it determined by any Injunction of our Saviour or his Apoſtles on what Days we are to faſt, and on what not. St. *Jerom* in his Letter to *Lucinius*, who asked his Advice about Faſting, and the Time and Manner of obſerving it, tells him that *every Country ought to follow its own Cuſtoms.* Particularly as to the *Saturday-Faſt*, St. *Auguſtine* in his Epiſtle to *Caſulanus*, who had conſulted him about the Keeping of it, anſwers thus, *When I am at Milan, I don't faſt on Saturdays, but when I am at Rome, I do; and ſo in what Church ſoevever you are, obſerve its Cuſtoms.* The like he ſaith in one of his Letters to *Januarius*.

If we guide our ſelves by the Primitive Practice, we muſt ſuffer the *People to chooſe their Miniſters and Paſtors.* This was the early Uſage in the Church, as we are informed from St. *Clement*'s firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, and *Ignatius*'s Epiſtle to the *Philadelphians.* St. *Cyprian* every where in his Epiſtles ſpeaks of this Popular Election, and approves of it. † *The People*, ſaith he, *have Power of chuſing thoſe into the Clergy who are Worthy, and of refuſing thoſe that are Unworthy.* We have many undeniable Examples of the Election even of *Biſhops* by the Populacy, in the Writings not only of *Cyprian*, but of *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, *Evagrius*, *Nicephorus*, *Gregory Nazianzen* and *Poſſidonius* who writ St. *Auguſtine*'s Life. And this Suffrage of the People we find atteſted by *Gratian* in the *Decrees.* And yet there are other Examples of a contrary nature, and ſome Paſſages in the Writings of the Antients favour the Practice. Wherefore the

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* Quibus diebus non oportet jejunare, & quibus oporteat, præcepto Domini vel Apoſtolorum nondum invenio definitum. *Auguſtin. Epiſt.* 86. *ad Caſulan.*

† — Quando ipſa (i. e. Plebs) maximè habeat poteſtatem vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recuſandi. *Epiſt. lib.* 1. *Ep.* 4.

Fathers

Fathers are not to be relied upon, as to the Hiſtorical Part relating to the Church and its Adminiſtrations; for the Accounts which they give us of theſe are inconſiſtent with one an other.

The Primitive Celebrating of the *Firſt Day of the Week as the Chriſtian Sabbath*, is not ſo clearly atteſted by the Antients as that we can make no Diſpute about it from what we read in their Writings. For though they tell us, that in the *Weſtern* Churches Sunday was the only Day that was kept holy as the Chriſtian Sabbath or Lord's Day, and that Saturday was a Faſt-day; yet they inform us, that the *Eaſtern* Churches kept * Saturday as a Feſtival-day of Reſt and Publick Worſhip. *The Primitive Church*, ſaith † a Learned Prelate, *kept both the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, 'till the Time of the Laodicean Council, about three hundred Years after Chriſt's Nativity, and almoſt in every Thing made them Equal.* So that they who ground the Obſervation of the Lord's Day on the *Writings of the Fathers* and *mere Eccleſiaſtical Authority* have no Solid Foundation for it.

It is not eaſy to tell from the Records of the Antient Chriſtian Doctors, what was their Senſe and Practice about *Compulſion in Matters of Religion*. *Lactantius* declares his Judgement thus, § *Slaughter and Piety are two different Things: It is impoſſible that the Truth ſhould be joined with Violence, and Righteouſneſs with Cruelty.* *Tertullian* is of the ſame Mind, for he expreſsly ſaith, ‖ *'Tis no Property of Religion to compel Men to be Religious.* But at an

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* Ignat. Epiſt. Athanaſ. Homil. de Sacrament. Socrat. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 6. c. 8. Concil. Laodic. Can. 16.

† Biſhop *Taylor*, of the Decalogue.

§ Longè diverſa ſunt carnificina & pietas; nec poteſt aut Veritas cum Vi, aut Juſtitia cum Crudelitate conjungi. *Inſtit. lib.* 3.

‖ Religionis non eſt cogere ad Religionem. *Ad Scapulam. cap.* 2.

other time he contradicts himſelf, and ſaith, † *Hereticks deſerve to be compelled and forced to their Duty, and not be won by fair Means.* The Orthodox Fathers thought fit to deliver them up to the Secular Powers, and accordingly we read * that the Firſt Chriſtian Emperors, *Conſtantine the Great*, *Arcadius*, *Honorius*, *Theodoſius*, inflicted bodily Puniſhments upon them. *Auguſtine* would have Hereticks dealt with in the way of Conference and Diſputation, *Cont. Creſcon. Grammat.* But 'tis well known, that at an other Time, *viz.* in his Epiſtles to *Boniface* and *Vincentius*, he contends for the Uſe of Force and Violence; and gives his Reaſons why Secular Authority and Severity ſhould be uſed againſt Hereticks and Schiſmaticks.

Concerning *going to War*, *Origen* ſeems to take both Parts: At one time he holds 'tis lawful, *cont. Celſ. lib.* 4. at another time he condemns it, *lib.* 8. and *Homil.* 35. *in Matth.* So *Tertullian* is inconſiſtent: In his *Apolog. cap* 37. and 42. he utters Words which plainly ſhew that Chriſtians held it lawful to go to War: But in his Book of *Idolatry*, *cap.* 19. and in his *Corona milit. cap.* 11. he diſallows it; for he ſaith, *Omnem poſtea militem Dominus in Petro exarmando diſcinxit*; Our Lord when he diſarmed *Peter* of his Sword, did the ſame to every Soldier. And *Cyprian* his Scholar, ſeems to join with him. So doth *Lactantius*, *Inſtitut. lib.* 6. *c.* 24.

Concerning the *Unlawfulneſs of Uſury*, the Fathers, and even the Councils agree in This, as much or more than in any one Thing that I can name; and yet we are not able to govern our Practice by what they have determined. For ſome of them forbid only the *Clergy* to lend or borrow upon

† Ad officium hæreticos compelli, non allici, dignum eſt: Duritia vincenda, non ſuadenda eſt. *Adv. Gnoſtic. cap.* 92.

* Cod. Tit. de Hæretic.

Uſury;

Uſury; whence it is plain, that thoſe of this Opinion do not look upon Uſury as a Practice unlawful in itſelf; for if it were ſo, not only the Clergy, but all Perſons ſhould be prohibited this Practice. There are * others of the Antients, who will not allow any *Laick* to put out his Money to Uſe; for they hold that it is unlawful in itſelf and in its own Nature, and that there is no Sort of Uſury that is Innocent. Other Doctors of the Church allow it both to Clergy and Laity, with ſome *Reſtrictions.*

There is no Harmony amongſt the Fathers about *Oaths*, that is, whether it be lawful to Swear at all, and eſpecially before a Magiſtrate. The Antienteſt of them, as *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen* condemn this Practice, and talk perfectly like Quakers on this Head: So do ſome others that followed them, as *Jerom* in his Commentary on the 5th of St. *Matthew*, *Chryſoſtom* in his 17th Homily on the ſame Evangeliſt, *Baſil* on the fifteenth Pſalm, *Epiphanius* in his 59th Hereſy, *Theodoret* in his Epit. of the Div. Decrees, chap 16. And yet the beſt and moſt judicious Authors maintain that theſe Fathers, or ſome of them at leaſt, even in thoſe Places which are alledged, do not condemn all Swearing, but only the Abuſe of it, that is, Raſh and Vain Swearing and Perjury. Thus *Baſil ad Amphiloc. Chryſoſtom Hom. 5. ad pop. Antioch.* are to be underſtood according to ſome Mens Apprehenſions. However, the Senſe of theſe Writers is dubious.

The Antient Writers ſeem to contradict themſelves and one an other, in the Account which they give of *Churches* or *Buildings* erected for the Publick Worſhip of God in the Primitive Times. For *Tertullian* in his *Apology*, chap. 19. relates, that the Chriſtians met together in ordinary and private

† Concil. Nic. Can. 18. Carthag. Can. 12. Eliberit. Can. 20.

Houſes; and ſeveral other Writers, as *Origen againſt Celſus*, *Lactantius* of *Falſe Religion*, *Arnobius againſt the Gentiles*, *Minutius Felix*, tell us the Primitive Chriſtians had no Temples or Publick Edifices to meet in. And yet *Tertullian* himſelf in his Book of *Idolatry*, and in that of *the Veiling of Virgins*, and *Juſtin Martyr* in his *ſecond Apology* acquaint us, that in their Time Religious Structures were built by the Chriſtians in order to their aſſembling together to ſerve God publickly; and *Euſebius* is poſitive, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, lib. 8. cap. 1, and 3. that at the Beginning of the third Century the Chriſtians began to build Temples and Oratories, and that in his Time they were not content with their old Buildings, μηδαμῶς ἔτι τοῖς πάλαι οἰκοδομήμασιν ἀρκούμενοι, but built larger and more ſpatious Churches, *Hiſt. Eccl. l.* 8. *c.* 1. It is evident then that they had Churches (ſuch as they were) before theſe ſpacious ones were erected.

Abſolute Non-Reſiſtance or *Paſſive Obedience*, without any Reſtriction or Reſerve, is alledged by ſome out of the Fathers as an Univerſal Practice; and yet we have Inſtances to the contrary in their Writings; as in *Socrates*'s *Eccleſiaſt. Hiſt. lib.* 2. *cap.* 10. *lib.* 5. *cap.* 11. *lib.* 7. *cap.* 13. and *Evagrius*, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 7. At preſent I will mention only one, out of *Euſebius*'s Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, l. 10. c. 8, 9. He lets us know, that when *Licinius*, the Emperor of the Eaſt, broke his Faith with the Chriſtians his Subjects, they unanimouſly took up Arms in their own Defence, and they were backed and aſſiſted by *Conſtantine the Great*. I am not now diſputing the Lawfulneſs or Unlawfulneſs of the Thing, but I only obſerve (which is to my preſent Purpoſe) that there was not an entire Agreement amongſt the Primitive Chriſtians in the Point of Unlimited Obedience to their Princes, and therefore Arguments fetched from their Practice are invalid. I will farther take notice, that the Fathers underſtood

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the 13th chap. of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, which commands *Subjection to the Higher Powers*, and forbids *Reſiſtance*, concerning Good Princes, and no other. *Origen* declares in his Comment on this Chapter, that the *Apoſtle doth not ſpeak here of ſuch Powers as perſecute the Servants of God, and oppoſe the Faith, and ſubvert Religion, but of thoſe which are not a Terrour to Good Works, but to Evil ones.* *Chryſoſtom* agrees with him in this Interpretation of the Text: And ſo doth *Theodoret*, Οὐ γὰρ τῦ θεῦ χειροτονία τῶν ἀδίκων ἐξουσία, ἀλλ' αὐτὴ τῆς ἡγεμονίας οἰκονομία; The Power of wicked Princes, ſaith he, is not God's Ordination; but only the Diſpenſation of Ruling and Governing; that is the *Office* of a Magiſtrate or Ruler is here meant, not the *Perſon.*

We can't, I humbly conceive, inform our ſelves, from what we meet with in the Second and Third Centuries, that they uſed *Set Forms of Prayer in their Publick Aſſemblies*, and that they never made uſe of Conceived or Extemporary Addreſſes. I muſt here obſerve to the Reader, that St. *Cyprian* in his *Treatiſe of the Lord's Prayer*, where he treats of Prayer in all its Circumſtances, ſaith nothing of a Compleat Form of Prayer uſed in any Churches. So *Origen* in his excellent *Diſcourſe of Prayer*, where he treats of all Kinds of Prayer, hath not a Syllable of Set Forms or Liturgies. He that hath diligently read *Ignatius*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and the Church Hiſtorians, *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, will not find ground to ſay that there were *Stated Liturgies* in thoſe firſt Times. And yet I deny not that there are Paſſages in ſome of thoſe Writers, and others, that may be interpreted in favour of them.

Publick Prayers in the Congregations were before Sermon, according to *Tertullian*, Apolog. cap. 39. but after Sermon ſaith *Juſtin Martyr* in his* Apology.

* Clem. Alexandr. Pædagog. l. 2. c. 4. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. Ambroſ. Iſidor. Peluſ.

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Some of the Fathers ſeem to approve of *Organs* and ſuch like Muſick in Churches, * but others diſapprove of this Way of Worſhip.

* Juſtin. Mart. Qu. et Reſp. ad Orthod. Chryſoſt. in Pſal. 144. et Pſal. 150. Auguſtin. Confeſſ. lib. 10. cap. 33. Hieronym. Comment. in 5. Eph. 19. Theodoret. in Pſal. 32, et 150.

CHAP. IX.

THE *Creed* itſelf, that goes under the Name of the *Apoſtles*, was compiled by *them*, ſay † *Tertullian* and § *Irenæus*; the ſame is affirmed by *Origen*, *Ambroſe*, *Rufinus*, *Jerom*, *Caſſian*, *Auguſtine*; and ſome of theſe Writers aſſign the *Particular Articles* which each Apoſtle framed: But other Antient Writers are wholly ſilent about it. There is not one of the noted Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians, that is, *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Theodoret*, *Evagrius*, that makes the leaſt mention of this Draught of the Chriſtian Faith, or the Compiling of it; and none of the Primitive Councils appeal to it. And the very Writers who were firſt mentioned diſagree amongſt themſelves about the Time and Manner, when and how theſe Articles were drawn up. As to the Article of *Chriſt's Deſcent into Hell*, 'tis not to be found in any Antient Creed, either Eaſtern or Weſtern, (as Biſhop *Pearſon* hath particularly inſtanced in all of them in his *Expoſition* of that Article) except only one, that of *Aquileia* mentioned by *Rufinus* in his Expoſition of the Apoſtle's Creed. *Cyprian*, *Rufinus*, *Caſſian* and *Maximus Taurinenſis* differ even about the Meaning of the Title *Symbolum* given to this Creed: But the grand Difference is about the Meaning of the

† De Virginib. veland. cap. 1. § Lib. 1. cap. 2.

Article

Article itſelf of Chriſt's Deſcent into Hell. Some of the Fathers held, that by Ἅδης we are to underſtand a certain *Common Receptacle* for departed Souls, whether Good or Bad; and they aſſerted, that this Common Rendezvous of Souls is under the Earth. This was the Opinion of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, *Gregory Nyſſen*, *Auguſtine*, *Damaſcen*: But herein they diſagreed, that ſome of them were of the Perſuaſion that thoſe Souls were detained in thoſe Infernal Cells 'till Chriſt's coming, others ſaid 'till the Reſurrection. But *Origen* among the *Greek* Writers, and *Cyprian*, *Ambroſe* and *Jerom* amongſt the *Latins*, and ſome others of the Weſtern Churches, explode the Notion of a Common Receptacle. St. *Auguſtine* himſelf acknowledges that the Diſputes ran high about this Point, *Solet eſſe magna Queſtio quomodo intelligatur* Infernus, *utrum an illuc mali tantùm, an etiam boni mortui deſcendere ſoleant*; Quæſt. 126. in Geneſ. Some of the Fathers, as *Athanaſius* and *Epiphanius*, affirmed that Chriſt deſcended into *Hell*, as it ſignifies the Place of the Damned, and the Habitation of Diabolick Spirits: But they don't agree on the *Reaſons* why Chriſt deſcended thither. Some ſay to preach the Goſpel to thoſe *Jews* and *Gentiles* that were not converted: Others tell us that he went into the Place of the Damned to triumph over the Devils. If the Reader will be pleaſed to conſult not only the Writers before mentioned, but *Ignatius*, *Epiſt. 2. ad Trallianos*. *Athanaſius Orat. de Incarnat. Clem. Alexandrinus Strom. 6. Cyrill of Jeruſ. Cat. 4. Greg. Naz. Orat.* 29. he will find that the Learned Author of the *Hiſtory of the Apoſtle's Creed* was in the right, when he ſaid, "It is too manifeſt that ſeveral of the "Fathers and Primitive Writers had no diſtinct "and clear Apprehenſions of this Article, but "were uncertain and confuſed in their Notions "thereabouts.

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In the early Times it was diſputed, whether St. *Paul*, or St. *Luke*, or *Barnabas*, or *Clement the Roman* was the Author of the *Epiſtle to the Hebrews*.

An *Epiſtle to the Lacedemonians*, writ by St. *Paul*, was talked of, and there was ſuch an Epiſtle extant in *Jerom*'s Time, and in *Epiphanius*'s. But it was rather an Epiſtle of the *Lacedemonians* to St. *Paul*, as *Theodoret*, *Chryſoſtom* and other Antient Writers affirm.

It was not agreed what *James* it was that was Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, whether *James* the Son of *Alpheus*, one of the Twelve, or *James the Juſt*, who was Brother to our Lord.

Whether there were *Sponſors* at Baptiſm is not certainly to be known from the Fathers; for tho' *Tertullian* mentions them, and at the ſame time diſallows them; yet *Juſtin Martyr* is wholly ſilent about them, when he deſignedly ſpeaks of *Baptiſm*, and the *Manner* and *Ordering* of it.

We can't certainly tell from the Fathers Writings what the *Primitive Government of the Church* was: I ſay, *not certainly*, for the Offices of *Deacon* and *Presbyter*, as to ſome Branches of them, are differently repreſented to us, as all the Learned know, and I need not be particular. Several Fathers, as *Polycarp*, *Clemens Romanus*, *Irenæus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Epiphanius*, are quoted by Dr. *Hammond* (*Annot. on* xi. *Acts* 30.) to prove that there were not Three Orders of Churchmen in the Apoſtle's Times; there were no Presbyters, but only Biſhops and Deacons. And even as to the *Epiſcopal* Dignity and Juriſdiction there is no ſmall Diſagreement; for though *Ignatius*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Origen* mention Biſhops as a Diſtinct Order from Prieſts, yet ſome Antient Writers ſay nothing of this, and others ſpeak to the contrary. *Grotius*, giving his Opinion concerning *Clement's firſt Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, tells

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us, that * "That Primitive Writer is ſilent about "that Unrivaled and Single Authority of *Biſhops*, "which began firſt to be introduced into the "Church at *Alexandria* after St. *Mark*'s Death; "but according to Apoſtolick Order the Churches "were governed not by one ſingle Perſon, but by "the common Conſent and Advice of the Presby-"ters, who by St. *Paul* are called *Biſhops*".

Even ſome of the Antient Writers, who were Biſhops themſelves, aſſert that Biſhops and Presbyters ruled together in common. A learned and pious Father, who underſtood the Nature of Eccleſiaſtical Government, and exerted it as much as any Man in the Epiſcopal Station, hath acquainted us, that the † Care of the Churches did not belong to one only, but they were governed by the Common Advice and Counſel of the Presbyters; the Care was divided equally among many. Even in all Ordinations of the Clergy this excellent Biſhop conſulted the People, as his own expreſs Words teſtify, *In ordinationibus Clericis, fratres chariſſimi, ſolemus vos antè conſulere, & mores ac merita ſingulorum communi conſilio ponderare.* Epiſt. 33. ad Cler. & Plebem. *Jerom*'s Language in his Commentary on 1 Tit. 1. is, *Idem Presbyter qui et Epiſcopus*: and again, in his Epiſtle to *Evagrius*, *Apoſtolus perſpicuè docet eoſdem eſſe Presbyteros quos & Epiſcopos.* And in this Epiſtle he quotes ſeveral Places in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles to prove and confirm this. The very ſame is aſſerted by *Chryſoſtom*,

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* Nuſquam meminit exſortis illius Epiſcoporum authoritatis, quæ Eccleſiæ conſuetudine, poſt Marci mortem, Alexandriæ, atque eo exemplo alibi introduci cœpit; ſed planè, ut Paulus Apoſtolus oſtendit, Eccleſias communi Presbyterorum, qui iidem omnes et Epiſcopi ipſi Paulo dicuntur, Conſilio fuiſſe gubernatos. *Epiſt. ad Hieronym. Bignonium.*

† Communi Presbyterorum conſilio Eccleſiæ gubernantur.—— æqualiter inter plures Eccleſiæ cura dividitur. *Cyprian. de Veritate Eccleſ. Cathol.*

Homil.

Homil. 1. *in Epiſt. ad Philip. Homil.* 2. *in* 1 Tim. 3. and in other Places, by *Ambroſe* in 1 *Epiſt. ad* Tim. *cap.* 3. and by *Theodoret in eund. loc.*

Far be it from me to diſlike what our Church hath determined and practiſed about the *Epiſcopal Government*, but I only ſuggeſt this, that we cannot depend upon the *Fathers* for the Proof of it: Or if the *Fathers* had agreed about this Matter, it would not be very ſatisfactory, becauſe we know they concur in ſome things, for which they have no Foundation. Mr. *Dodwell*, who was well skilled in the Writings of the Fathers, expreſsly declares *, "That he cannot find there, or in Scrip-"ture, that there were any ſuch Officers as Bi-"ſhops in the Church at the Beginning". And at an other time, he peremptorily aſſerts, † That *there were no ſuch Rulers in the Church at firſt as Biſhops.* An other Writer of our Church profeſſes, ‖ That *he can find nothing in any Writers of the firſt three Centuries to prove that* Timothy *was made Biſhop of* Epheſus, *and* Titus *of* Crete, *and that he can find no Intimation that they bore that Name.*

As to the *Succeſſion of Biſhops* in the Primitive Ages, though it is often urged by *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian* his Diſciple, and by *Auguſtine*, it hath no ſure Foundation in the Writings of the Antients, as *Euſebius* acknowledges, when he is ſpeaking of thoſe that were the firſt Biſhops after the Apoſtles. § *How many, and who they were, that were thought worthy to govern the Churches which were founded by the Apoſtles, it is not eaſy to tell*, ſaith he.

Some of the Fathers make St. *Peter* to be ſole

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* Diſcourſe of one Altar.

† De Jur. Laic. *cap.* 3.

‖ Dr. *Whitby*'s Pref. to the Epiſt. to *Titus.*

§ Ὅσοι δὲ τότων· ἢ τίνες γνήσιοι ζηλωταὶ γεγονότες, τὰς πρὸς αὐτῶν ἐδρυθείσας ἱκανοὶ ποιμάνειν ἐδοκιμάσθησαν ἐκκλησίας, ἐ ῥᾴδιον εἰπεῖν. Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 3. *c.* 4.

Biſhop

Biſhop of *Rome*: But this is corrected by others, who hold that the Church of *Rome* was founded by *Peter* and *Paul*: *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, and other Antient Writers ſay, that both theſe Apoſtles were equally concerned in the Government of that Church; they reckon them as Joint-Biſhops; or, to ſpeak plainly, as Miniſters and Paſtors of two diſtinct Congregations: And this is the true Notion of the Primitive Biſhops. Some Fathers repreſent the Succeſſion of *Linus* and *Clement* one way, and ſome another. According to * *Euſebius*, the next Biſhop of *Rome* after St. *Peter* was *Linus*, and *Clement* immediately ſucceeded him: But according to † *Tertullian*, *Clement* was the Perſon that was St. *Peter*'s immediate Succeſſor. We are told by || *Irenæus*, that *Anacletus* was the next Biſhop of *Rome* after St. *Peter*, and after *Anacletus*, the Biſhoprick devolved on *Clement*. Some confound *Cletus* and *Anacletus*, others diſtinguiſh them.

Euſebius, in the third Book of his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, cap. 1. reports from Tradition, that the Apoſtles choſe to themſelves the ſeveral Provinces of the habitable World, and went and preached the Goſpel there. But we are informed from ſeveral Relations in thoſe Times, that this was not true; for they tell us, that more Apoſtles than one were at the ſame time in thoſe reſpective Provinces: The Goſpel was preached, and Churches planted by two or three of them together in the ſame Place. *Peter* and *Paul* were at the ſame time at *Rome*; *Paul* and *Barnabas* at *Antioch*; *John*, and *Peter*, and *Paul* in *Aſia*. This doth invalidate the ordinary Notion of the going out of the Apoſtles into ſeveral Countries, as their *particular* and *peculiar Provinces*, to preach the Goſpel, which is mentioned not only by *Euſebius*, but by *Nice-*

* Hiſt. Eccl. *l.* 3. *c.* 4. † Præſcript. *cap.* 32. || Lib. 3. cap. 3.

phorus,

phorus, (Eccl. Hiſt. *lib.* 3.) and before theſe by *Origen* on *Geneſis*.

Thus the Reports of the Antient Writers, as to all Kinds of Eccleſiaſtical Adminiſtrations and Affairs, are various and contradictory. It is confeſſed by a learned * Writer of the *Roman* Communion, That *the Diſcipline of the Church hath not been the ſame in all Places and all Times: It is an undeniable Truth, that it hath been different in many Churches, and hath been from Time to Time liable to change.* The ſame Perſon having undertaken to give an Abridgement of the Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline in the three firſt Centuries, ends thus; "No "Body ought to conclude from what hath been "ſaid here, that all theſe Things were practiſed "in all Churches, and in all Times in the three "firſt Centuries. Some began to be uſed but in "the third Age, and others were only obſerved "in ſome particular Churches. After all, it muſt "be confeſſed, that the Diſcipline of the Church "hath been ſo extremely different, and ſo often "altered, that it is almoſt impoſſible to ſay any "thing poſitively concerning it". So then what are we the better for the Writings of the Fathers, about the Uſages in the firſt Chriſtian Churches? They impart nothing to us that we are to make a certain Rule for our Behaviour, with Relation to religious Ceremonies or Diſcipline; for there was nothing certain and ſettled about Matters of this Nature in the Firſt Churches.

But I will next confine myſelf wholly to *Socrates*'s *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, and particularly to the 21*ſt* Chapter of his 5*th* Book, which will thoroughly convince us of the *Uncertainty* and *Unſettledneſs* of the Rites and Uſages in thoſe Primitive Times, and, in Conſequence of that, the Writings of the Antients will be found to be very Uſeleſs and In-

* *Du Pin* Bibliotheque.

ſignificant,

ſignificant, with Reference to the Subject we are now upon. This Hiſtorian acquaints us, that the *Greek Fathers* ſay one thing, and the *Latins* an other, concerning the Time of the Celebration of the *Paſchal Feaſt*, which, however, he owns to be a Diſpute of but little Importance. He ſets down the different Cuſtoms about keeping of *Lent*, and yet he obſerves, that they all pretend to aſſign Reaſons for their different Practices. He tells us, that though the Euchariſt was generally celebrated on *Saturdays*, yet the Churches of *Rome* and *Alexandria* varied from this Practice; and that thoſe Churches, which were very near to *Alexandria*, met together on *Saturdays*, and obſerved that Time as holy, but did not receive the Sacrament at that Time. He adds, that there are different and contrary Cuſtoms about *Readers* and *Singers*, about the *married Clergy*, about the Time of celebrating *Baptiſm*. In *Antioch* the Altars are ſituated toward the *Weſt*; though in other Churches they have an *Eaſtern* Poſition. He relates Cuſtoms of a different Nature about *Praying*, and thus concludes Καθόλε μέντοι πανταχῆ καὶ παρὰ πάσαις θρησκείαις τῶν ἐυχῶν ἔκ ἐστιν ἐυρεῖν συμφωνέσας ἀλλήλαις δύο ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό. i. e. Upon the whole, among all the Ways of worſhiping God by Prayer, you will ſcarcely find two Churches agreeing in the Manner of it. He proceeds to obſerve the like Diſcrepancy about *Preaching*, and about *admitting of Perſons to the Holy Communion*; and he ſaith, *the Biſhops, who preſided over the Churches in their reſpective Times, were the Authors and Inventors of theſe different Obſervances: And thoſe that came after them received theſe Rites, and delivered them to their Poſterity as a Law.* He ſhuts up all thus, * *The Church being once divided, it reſted not*

* Ἡ Ἐκκλησία ἔκ ἐνέμεινε τῇ γινομένῃ πρώτῃ διαιρέσει· καὶ οἱ διαιρεθέντες καθ' ἑαυτῶν πάλιν ἐχώρεν, μικρᾶς τε καὶ εὐτελοῦς πεφάσεως λαμβανόμενοι, ἀλλήλων διεχωείζοντο.

in the firſt Diviſion, but thoſe who were divided, carried on the Diviſion yet further among themſelves, and upon every ſlight Occaſion broke off from one an other.

This is the Account which this Writer gives us of the Practices among the *Firſt Chriſtians*, and we may rely upon the Truth of it; for he was a very curious and exact Enquirer into the Uſages of the Chriſtian Churches, and he generally confirms what he ſaith by antient Records and Originals, which he had diligently peruſed. Concerning this Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, we have this Teſtimony, * That *it is a Work written with ſingular Induſtry and Fidelity, and which the Author reviewed and corrected more than once: Nor did he trade in flying Reports; the Accounts he gives being either of ſuch Things as himſelf had ſeen, or had received from credible Eye-witneſſes, or tranſcribed from Records of unqueſtionable Authority.* Now, from this Writer, who was ſo faithful in all his Relations, we may be ſatisfied that the Churches in thoſe firſt Times, did not agree about the Obſervation of the Eccleſiaſtical Rites. We are informed from him, that there were different, yea contrary Cuſtoms in the Chriſtian Churches, relating to the Publick Worſhip and Diſcipline. Whence it infallibly follows, that the Writings, even of the moſt Antient Fathers, are no ways ſerviceable to ſettle us concerning the Rites or Government of the firſt Churches, and that (as the Sequel of it) we are not to be concerned what the Fathers ſay about theſe Matters; but on the contrary, we are to neglect and diſregard them.

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* Dr. *Cave*'s Pref. to the Lives of the Fathers of the Fourth Century.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

V. AND here now (according to my propounded Method) I will briefly ſhew, that our great Sticklers for the *Fathers* and *Antiquity* do this very thing; that is, tho' generally they cry up and applaud the Teſtimony and Practice of the Antients, yet as often as they pleaſe they diſregard them, and ſhew no Reſpect at all for them; yea, they contend for a contrary Practice, and thereby confute themſelves. There are ſeveral Inſtances of this, but I will produce only one or two that are very remarkable, and at this time very ſeaſonable. *Lay-Baptiſm* and *Rebaptizing*, are grown now the great Controverſy among us; but we may obſerve, that Dr. *Hicks*, and the other High Gentlemen who have ſwaggered ſo furiouſly for the obſerving of the *Practices* of the *Antient* and *Primitive Churches*, do now abandon them, and care not a Ruſh for the Fathers and Antiquity. *Lay-Baptiſm* in ſome Caſes was approved of as Legal and Valid, by the * Decree of the Council of *Eliberis*, by the † Determination of the Church of *Alexandria*, (occaſioned by certain Boys acting the Part of Biſhops); it is allowed of by *Tertullian* ||, by *Jerom* §, by *Optatus Milevitenſis* **, by *Vincentius Lirinenſis* ††, by *Auguſtine* ||||, by *Gelaſius* §§, by *Iſidore of Sevil* ||*. The ſingular Opinion of St. *Cyprian* and his *Africans*, who were for rebaptizing thoſe who had been baptized by Hereticks, was over-ruled by all other Churches;

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* Can. 38. † Socrat. & Sozom. *Hiſt. Eccl.* || De Baptiſmo, *c.* 17. § Dialog. eum Lucif. ** Cont. Parmen. *l.* 5. †† Commonit. 1. |||| Epiſt. ad Fortunat. De Baptiſmo, *c.* 9. §§ Epiſt. 9. ad Lucan. ||* De Offic. Eccl. *l.* 2.

yea, we are told by * *Auguſtine*, that *Cyprian* himſelf retracted his Opinion: And it is well known, that it was determined by the Firſt Council of *Nice*, that Baptiſm adminiſtered by Hereticks or Schiſmaticks was valid, if the right Form of Baptiſm was uſed, that is, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. The ſame is aſſerted by the Second General Council of *Conſtantinople*, and by other Councils. And they had the ſame Sentiment about *Ordination*; namely, that though it was Irregular, yet it was Valid; and therefore in the Antient Churches, when Heretick Prieſts were brought into Communion again, it was not required of them to receive new Ordination. And ſeveral of the Fathers have maintained, that the former was not null and void, but was in Force. Thus we ſee what was both the Senſe and Practice of the Primitive Churches.

Notwithſtanding which, ſeveral of our Divines, who vigorouſly cry up the *Antients*, diſcourſe, write, and act contrary to this Senſe and Practice. They throw off the *Fathers*, and condemn the Determinations of *Councils*, when it ſeems good to them. And what is the Deſign of this ſtrange Conduct? Why, it is no other than this, To repreſent all the *Reformed Churches* Abroad as unbaptized, and no Chriſtians, and in the ſame Manner to characteriſe the *Non-Conforming Teachers* at Home, and their Followers; the *Ordination* of the one, and the *Baptiſm* of the other being invalid and null, according to their Notions. But is it not a great Prevarication to oppoſe and contradict the *whole Current of Antiquity*, meerly to ſhew their Ill-will to the Diſſenters?

And are they not aſhamed to contradict the Sentiments of our *own Church*, and her moſt learned

* Mutatâ Sententiâ ad Eccleſiæ Catholicæ judicium ſeſe accommodavit. *Epiſt.* 48. ad Vincent.

Divines?

Divines? At *Hampton Court* Conference, Dr. *Bancroft*, the Biſhop of *London*, declared for the Lawfulneſs of Lay-Baptiſm, That it * *was agreeable to our Church's Office of Baptiſm, and to the Practice of the Antient Church, as appears by the Authority of* Tertullian, *and St.* Ambroſe *on the 4th of the* Epheſians, *who are plain in that Point.* And though the Words in the Rubrick were altered by the King's Order, yet Dr. *Heylin* tells us, that by *a lawful Miniſter* (which was then inſerted) is not excluded, one that celebrates Baptiſm, tho' he be of the Laity. Wherefore it cannot but be very nauſeous to any conſiderate and intelligent Perſon, to hear ſome Men ſo confidently crack of *Antiquity*, and the *Fathers*, and yet make it their Buſineſs to oppoſe them, and render them contemptible, and of no value. I am not now enquiring into the Merits of the Cauſe, and examining whether the Antients did well in allowing of *Lay-Baptiſm*, (which, without doubt, was grounded on a ſuperſtitious Opinion of the Abſolute Neceſſity of Baptiſm); but at preſent I only take notice of the Inconſiſtency of ſome Men, who at one time ſhew a great Reverence and Regard for the Practice of the *Antients*, but at other Times they ſlight and diſregard it. The *Fathers* have no Force and Authority with them but when they pleaſe, that is, when they fancy that they ſpeak on their Side.

One in his *Proœmial Diſſertations* before St. *Chryſoſtom of Prieſthood*, ſhews himſelf a Great Admirer of the *Antient Writers* of the Church, when he thinks they take his Part; otherwiſe he hath no Regard for them, and vilifies what they ſay. See this in his Judgement that he paſſes on *Tertullian*, one of the Acuteſt and Learnedeſt of the Primitive Fathers: He repreſents him as *a weak and ſorry*

* Dr. *Heylin*'s Introduction to Archbiſhop *Laud*'s Life.

Writer, ſaying nothing to the Purpoſe, trifling, vain, and futilous, without Force and Weight, having nothing ſound and ſolid in him. He cries out on this Occaſion, *Deus bone!* and by and by, *Mehercule!* Half Pious, half Pagan. He tells us that the Antient Chriſtian Church taught, that a Sinner, tho' never ſo much humbled, contrite, and penitent, is not juſtified 'till he receive the *Abſolution* of a Prieſt: He aſſerts, that Ordination *without Preſbyters* is valid, and the Biſhop alone can make a Prieſt. He ſaith, that by the *Suffrage of the People*, ſo often mentioned by St. *Cyprian*, is not meant the Conſent of the People, but only their bare Teſtimony, which is diſowned even by the learnedeſt Advocates of Epiſcopacy: And beſides, there are other Expreſſions uſed by *Cyprian*, which plainly ſignify that the People were not meer *Witneſſes*, but that their *Conſent* was required. All theſe fore-mentioned Aſſertions of this Writer are directly contrary to the Senſe and Determination of *Antient Councils*, *Decrees*, and *Fathers*; yet he expreſſes a very great Reſpect for Antiquity, and lays his great Streſs there.

I cannot but take notice here of an other * Writer, who paſſes with ſome Perſons (as with Dr. *Whitby*, who had been mentioned by him with ſome flattering Language, and therefore the Dr. returns it in the ſame Stile) as a ſhrewd Penman: But, to ſpeak freely, there is not a Book that I have met with of that Bulk, that hath ſo many falſe and ſophiſtical Reaſonings, and ſuch a Number of Inconſequences and even Contradictions as this hath. I might obſerve, that though he ſeems to be an irreconcileable Enemy to the Church of *Rome*, yet at other times he is a Favourer of the *Roman* Communion, and even refuſes to go along

* Mr. *J. Gale*, in his Reflections on Mr. *Wall's* Hiſtory of Infant-Baptiſm.

with

with the Biſhop of *Sarum*, who had ſaid in his Expoſition of the Sixth Article of the Church of *England*, That the *Invocation of Angels and Saints, the Worſhipping of Images, Croſſes, and Relicks, are intolerable Errours, if, as the Scripture is expreſs in Oppoſition to them, ſo they defile the Worſhip of Chriſtians with Idolatry.* But good Mr. *Gale* cannot ſubmit to this, and therefore his Words are theſe; [* I forbear to add, as his Lordſhip doth, *with Idolatry.*] By no Means will this Writer (who ſo often profeſſes himſelf a *True Proteſtant*) allow of this Doctrine, namely, that Praying to Angels and Saints (which is worſhiping them) is *Idolatry*, and therefore he clears the Church of *Rome* of that Crime. I might take notice, that he mightily pretends to *Charity*, *Moderation*, *Meekneſs*, and *Peaceableneſs*, and he profeſſes that *he is backward to uſe ſo much as an ordinary Liberty of cenſuring others*; yet in every Page he indecently crows over his Adverſary, he inſolently traduces him, he ſcornfully and contemptuouſly treats him, and, in a Word, he ſhews nothing of that peaceable Spirit which he brags of, and would make us believe he is Maſter of. And truly this is the conſtant Guiſe of this Sort of Writers; they extoll Meekneſs, and Charity, and ſoft Language, and yet plentifully rail when they pleaſe, and treat their Adverſaries without any Decorum and Modeſty.

He every where ſhews himſelf a Man of wonderful Confidence, and is, in his own Opinion, the greateſt and ableſt Champion for the Cauſe of *Anabaptiſm* that ever yet appeared, as ſundry of his Expreſſions broadly tell us. Indeed we ſhall not any where meet with a Writer that is ſuch a fond Admirer of himſelf, and of his own Performances as he is.

But this by the Bye; that which I chiefly deſigned at preſent is this, to take notice of the ill

* Pag. 231.

Uſe which he makes of the Fathers, when he is attempting to perſuade his Readers, that *Infant-Baptiſm* cannot be proved from any Paſſages in the Writings of thoſe Antients. Whereas before, in ſeveral Places of his Book, he had extolled theſe Writers, and had made it almoſt Blaſphemy to ſay any thing that reflects on the Credit of thoſe Antients; now no Man can be more free in his cenſuring them than he; and he ſeems reſolved to reject their Teſtimony, though it be never ſo plain againſt him. It cannot but trouble the ingenuous and impartial Reader, to ſee what miſerable Work he makes, in miſinterpreting the Paſſages in *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and *Origen*, which aſſert *Infant-Baptiſm*. And it cannot eſcape our Obſervation, that though he argues for *Immerſion* in Baptiſm, yea, and for the Abſolute and Indiſpenſible Neceſſity of it in all Ages of the Chriſtian Church, from the Antient Practice of the Church, and the Approbation of the Fathers; yet he ſtands not up for the *Manner* of it, which was conſtantly and perpetually obſerved by thoſe very *Antients*; that is, Dipping the Perſons *thrice* in the Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to teſtify their firm Belief and Profeſſion of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Our fierce Advocate for *Immerſion* doth not urge the Practice of this Antient Rite, which always accompanied the other; whereas, if he had not been moſt ſhamefully partial and byaſſed, he ſhould have preſſed the Practice of the *Antients* for one as well as for the other. But it is not unknown to ſome why he baulks the *Trine Immerſion*, namely, becauſe of his Averſion to the orthodox Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and his Kindneſs to the *Socinians* which he openly profeſſes. It is no Wonder that a Man of this Kidney can afford to applaud the *Fathers*, when he hath ſome Intereſt to ſerve by them, when he thinks they be ſerviceable to

authorize

authorize his own Opinions and Sentiments; tho' when they run counter to theſe, he cares not for them, but deſpiſes their Teſtimony and Suffrage.

I could mention other Inſtances. I will beg Leave to add this one more, though it may ſeem not to be very conſiderable; and truly I don't lay any Streſs upon it. However, it is pertinent to my Purpoſe, becauſe it will ſhew how we ſwerve from the Practice of the Antient Fathers of the Church, though we expreſs a profound Regard to their Example. We ſhew that we have but a mean Opinion of thoſe Great Men, when we are not contented with their Way of mentioning the Apoſtles and Inſpired Writers, but think them not reverent enough in their Naming and Alledging of them: and therefore we ſtrive to *exceed* them, and to prefix *Saint* to every Apoſtle, and Evangeliſt, and Sacred Writer, and to moſt of the Antient Fathers; though we are ſure this was not the Practice of the moſt pious Writers, when they ſpeak of the Apoſtles, or of their Succeſſors in the next Ages, who were Eminent for their Piety and Learning.

Not that I approve of thoſe who love to diſtinguiſh themſelves by this, that they never, in their Sermons or Writings, give the Name of *Saint* to any of the Apoſtles; but when they mention them, it is without this Title, as if it were unlawful to ſpeak of them under that Character. Surely if they were *Saints*, (and none can doubt of it) we need not be afraid or aſhamed to call them ſo. But I think we are not always bound to obſerve this, and we have the moſt religious Fathers and Doctors of the Church, both *Greek* and *Latin*, our Examples in this Particular. They, in their Writings, generally call the Apoſtles by their Names, without prefixing *Saints* to them; and it is very ſeldom they do otherwiſe. *Juſtin Martyr*, when he mentions the Apoſtles, barely names them. In *Tertullian* we read of plain *Peter*, and plain *Paul*; and

and ſo of other Apoſtles. *Chryſoſtom* in his *Expoſition of the Pſalms*, calls the Great Apoſtle *Bleſſed Paul*, but very ſeldom: In his *Encomiaſtick Oration upon* Peter *and* Paul, he mentions them all along by their bare Names: In his *Sermon* or *Oration on the Twelve Apoſtles*, he only calls them by their Names, and never gives them the Title of *Saints*: In his *Oration on St.* John, he mentions only his Name: And in his *Commentaries* and *Homilies on St.* John's *Goſpel*, he doth the ſame. Though he hath ſix Homilies, Εἰς τὸν Ἅγιον Ἀπόστολον Παῦλον, yet in the two firſt of them he calls that Apoſtle barely *Paul*: And in the four laſt, the Epithet μακάριος, is given him not above thrice. *Gregory Nazianzen* calls the Apoſtles by their Names, aud ſaints them not; neither doth *Athanaſius*. *Baſil the Great*, the famous Rhetorician, mentions plain *Paul* and *John*. *Gregory Nyſſen*, when he names any of the other Apoſtles or Evangeliſts, generally uſes not any Addition. *Epiphanius* doth the like throughout his Writings. So doth *Macarius* in his Homilies, and *Baſil of Seleucia* in his Orations: And other Fathers might be produced on this Occaſion.

If we conſult the *Greek* of the New Teſtament, we ſhall find there *The Goſpel according to Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *John*, not St. *Matthew*, &c. and though ſome of our *Engliſh* Bibles read it St. *Matthew*, &c. yet others do not. According to the *Greek*, it is the *Epiſtle of Paul the Apoſtle to the Romans*, *to the Corinthians*, *to the Galatians*, &c. So the *Epiſtle of James*, *Peter*, *Jude*, *the Epiſtles of John*, not ſo much as *Apoſtle* added. Look into the *Canon Law*, the *Decrees* and *Decreetals*, and you will frequently find that an Apoſtle is not ſainted. In the *Homilies* of our Church, it is plain *Paul* ſometimes: And this way of Speaking is uſed in the *Thirty Nine Articles*: But who dares to cenſure our Church for indecent and irreverent Language?

Our

Our immediate Anceſtors, who were as devout as we are, thought that *Paul's Church* and *Paul's Croſs* ſounded very well. But, which is more material, ſome of our moſt eminent Preachers and Writers have conformed their Stile to that of the Antient Fathers. This may be ſeen in Biſhop *Jewell's* Writings: And Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton* College, in his Sermons, uſes *plain Paul* and *Peter* ſometimes. Dr. *Hammond*, in ſeveral Places on the *Epiſtles* of the former of theſe Apoſtles, uſes the ſame way of Speaking. In Biſhop *Wilkins's Gift of Preaching*, *Matthew*, *Mark*, and all the Writers of the New Teſtament, are mentioned without the Prefix of *Saints*, though the Book was lately corrected and reviſed by three or four Biſhops. Herein theſe Writers followed the Antient Doctors and Inſtructors of the Chriſtian Church, who (as I have ſhewed) oftentimes mentioned the inſpired Writers, but were not formal in giving them the Name of *Saints*.

But the Generality of our Preachers and Writers of late, even thoſe who pretend to be the greateſt *Admirers of the Antients*, are not forward to imitate them, but affect to be more reverent and devout than *They* were; yea, among ſome Men, thoſe are eſteemed as Irreligious and Profane, who will not in expreſs Terms ſaint all the *Primitive Fathers*, though it is doubtful whether ſome of them are worthy of that Honour. They generally owe this Title that is given them to the Church of *Rome*, which hath been pleaſed to Canonize them, and inſert them into the Kalendar of the Saints. And as to the Apoſtles themſelves, many are nice in giving them the Title of *Saints* in all their Diſcourſes and Writings, and yet have little Regard to the Doctrines and Truths which they have delivered, and to the Examples which they have left them. It is a Sign that our Religion conſiſts more in Words and Noiſe, than in Reality.

Reality. We ſee that the Holy Men in the Firſt Ages of Chriſtianity behaved themſelves otherwiſe, and ſhewed their Eſteem of the Saints by that which is Real and Solid, and not by a meer outward Formality in Words.

I lay theſe Things before the Reader, in Proſecution of my preſent Subject, and in Confirmation of what I have ſuggeſted to him, that the Example of the Antient Fathers is neglected by thoſe that cry them up as the greateſt Patterns of Piety and Reverence; and contend that they were exact in thoſe religious Qualities, and that their Practice in theſe and other Matters commands our Imitation and Conformity to it. But if they were ſo *exact*, why do we labour to *out-do* and *exceed* them, and in a Manner to charge them with want of Decency and Reverence? I appeal to the Reader, whether this doth not ſeem to be Contradictious.

I will adjoin an other Thing (though of a far different Nature from what I laſt mentioned) wherein we ſhew a great Diſreſpect to the Antient Writers, notwithſtanding our great Pretences of reverencing and honouring them. We cannot but obſerve, that the *Fathers* in their Sermons and Homilies are generally plain and familiar, and ſtick not to make Uſe of homely Expreſſions ſometimes, and Compariſons and Similitudes taken from ordinary Things, therein conforming themſelves to the Stile of the Holy Scriptures. But our modern Divines, even thoſe who pretend a great Eſteem for the Fathers, ſcorn to follow them in their Sermons and Pulpit Diſcourſes. They deride their plain way of Preaching and Diſcourſing: Sometimes they are pleaſed to call it *Canting*, at other times it is reckoned among *White Bears*. I muſt add, that their *Ardour* and *Vehemency* in their Writings and Sermons, (for which they were ſo Eminent) are ſo far from being imitated, that they are laughed at. The Warmth and Vigour of *Athanaſius*,

thanaſius, of *Gregory Nazianzen*, and *Nyſſen*, of *Chryſoſtom* and *Auguſtine*, who took Care to ſtir the Affections and Paſſions of their Hearers, are looked upon as Fanatick Heat and Zeal, ſo little do we value the beſt of the Antients.

Let me be permitted to offer one Thing more, *viz.* That the Euchariſt was inſtituted to be celebrated publickly, and by the Congregation of the Faithful; and this was the Practice not only of the Apoſtles in their Times, but in the *immediately ſucceeding Ages of the Church.* There is not one Inſtance to the contrary in the Writings of the *moſt early Fathers.* But afterwards with other Innovations there crept into the Church this following one, *viz.* that this Sacrament was privately adminiſtered, and the conſecrated Elements were ſent to the Chriſtians in their own Houſes. Something of this Nature obtains at this Day among us; that is, the Euchariſt is commonly delivered in private Houſes: But it ſeems to me to be contrary to the firſt Deſign and Inſtitution of this Ordinance, which was intended to be made Uſe of only in the publick Meetings and Congregations of Chriſtians, to keep a *Holy Communion* among them, which is one Reaſon why it hath this Denomination. Why then do we affect to be more Religious and Devout than the Firſt and Antienteſt Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, though we extoll them ſo highly?

But ſo it is, many Perſons are wont to ſtop our Mouths, with alledging and urging the Opinions and Practice of the Fathers; but then, when they are in an other Mood, they ſhew their Diſlike of them; which plainly ſhews, that the Reaſon why they cry up theſe Writers is, becauſe they find in them ſome Things which jump with the *preconceived Notions* which they had eſpouſed; and for the Sake of theſe, they profeſs a vaſt Kindneſs and Reſpect for the Fathers; though in other material Things, which are expreſs in their Writings, they refuſe to give

give Ear to them. Who would think that any Men of Senſe could ſo abuſe themſelves, as well as thoſe Writers? And who can think it reaſonable to give Heed to theſe Men when they quote the Antients, and expreſs their extreme Veneration for them, and are wont to build their Faith and Practice upon what they have delivered in their Writings? Generally when they quote a Father for what they hold, they look upon his Teſtimony as undeniable; it is as good as infallible Proof, and no Man muſt dare to contradict it: So high do they run up the Notion of *Antiquity* and the *Fathers*.

CHAP. XI.

VI. BUT I proceed now to what was next propounded, namely, to ſhew the *Folly* and *Danger* of this Conduct. Theſe Men doat on the *Antients*, and ſuck in their *Opinions*, becauſe they are *old*, not conſidering that when thoſe Perſons wrote thoſe Things they were young Chriſtians, juſt ſet into the Way of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, and their Judgement was raw and unexerciſed. It is *We* that are *Antients*. Thoſe in the Firſt Times were *Novices* and *young Beginners*; which ſhews how ſilly, how unreaſonable, how ridiculous a Thing it is to condemn every thing that is not thoroughly conformable to the Opinions and Cuſtoms of the *Antients*. The *Gentiles* kept up their Idolatry, and the *Jews* their antiquated Moſaick Rites under this Pretext. There were thoſe afterwards that knew this to be the *Foible* of Mankind generally, and accordingly they cheated them with *Spurious Antiquity*. Above thirty ſuppoſititious Writings, which are reckoned up by Dr. *Cave* and *Du Pin*, were palmed upon the Firſt Chriſtians, and by the Chriſtians themſelves; for ſome Zealots thought

thought they promoted the Credit of Religion, and ſerved the Cauſe of Chriſtianity, by forging of Writings, and even fixing the Names of Apoſtles to them. Theſe good and well-meaning Men thought, all was rightly done that was undertaken to defend the Truth. And afterwards, ſome prefixed the Names of Antient Authors to their Books, merely to conciliate a Reverence and Eſteem for their Antiquity.

Here I cannot but mention Dr. *Grabe*'s *Spicilegium*, as a pernicious Piece; for there he rakes together the *Fragments* which he meets with in ſeveral ſuppoſititious Writers, and propounds them as worthy of our Study and Imitation. He thinks he obliges the World, by giving them ſome Shreds and Scraps of *Simon Magus*, the Firſt-born of Satan, as *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* call him. He preſents us with the Remains of other Arch Hereticks, as *Baſilides*, *Valentinus*, *Heracleon*, &c. From the exceſſive Love and Eſteem which he had of the *Antients*, he judiciouſly muſters up a Multitude of ſuſpected and fabulous Authors, condemned as Spurious by the beſt Criticks. Though he ſhews his Diſlike of ſome Things in *Popery* (which he thought would not ſuit with the preſent Conſtitution) yet in others he diſcovered himſelf to be a great Friend and Admirer of Popiſh Doctrines, Worſhip, Rites, and Ceremonies: And that made him ſcrape together ſuch Writings of the Antients, as in ſome ſort favour them. In ſhort, this learned Writer was leading us to *Rome* by the Help and Conduct of ſome of the *Antients*, even ſuch whoſe Writings were condemned as Counterfeit and Adulterate.

And as for theſe Writings of the Antients which are owned to be written by thoſe whoſe Names they bear, the Church of *Rome* hath made great Advantage of them. The Relying on their Authority hath been the grand Source of the Corruptions in that Church. Diverſe fooliſh and ſuperſtitious

ſtitious Uſages were introduced into the Service of God in the four firſt Centuries, which ſhe retains; and ſhe juſtifies herſelf by alledging the Practice of thoſe *Antient Times*. The Fabulous Legends and Monſtrous Stories in the Church of *Rome* of their *Saints* had their Riſe hence; for they are in Imitation of the Lives of the *Hermits* and *Anchorets* written by ſome of the *Fathers*. Hence came their *Vows of Poverty* and *Celibacy*, their *Uneaſy Poſtures* and *Severe Penances*, their *Tedious Faſtings* and *Watchings*, their *Whippings* and *Scourgings*, whereby they write on their Skin and Fleſh their Folly in Legible Letters, and thoſe Bloody ones. Theſe and other Auſterities the Church of *Rome* apiſhly borrows from the Practice of ſome of the *Antients*, and tells her Diſciples that theſe will compound and atone for the vileſt Exorbitances; they will wipe out the greateſt Villanies, and fully diſcharge all the Arrears of their former Life; in ſhort, the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* do by theſe means nouriſh Superſtition and Immorality, and foſter the Doctrines of Supererogation, Satisfaction, and Merit.

Thus the affected Imitation of the *Primitive Times* is the great and common Support of Popery, and it will be a means to introduce it again among us, if we entertain the ſame Unreaſonable Value for the Antient Ceremonies and Uſages that thoſe People do. We know it hath been the Practice of Impoſtors to plead *Antiquity*, when they are deſigning to ſet up ſome Miſchievous Opinions of their own Invention. Whilſt they are undermining the Antient Primitive Faith, they extoll Antiquity, and pretend to it. Yea, all the Errours and Sects that we have been peſtered with, are but a Revival of thoſe which had their Riſe, in thoſe Firſt Times, preſently after the Apoſtle's Days: And therefore our Extravagant Admirers of *Antiquity*, if they ſtand to their Principles, ſhould have a Kindneſs

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for theſe Sects, becauſe they are Old and Grey-headed. And truly we ſee daily how this miſtaken Notion operates on Mens Minds, and produces ſtrange Effects. From ſome Examples (and thoſe at Home) we may learn what miſerable Work may be, and is made by doating on the Writings of the Antients, or thoſe which are ſuppoſed to have been compoſed by them.

Mr. *Dodwell* hath merited of the Learned World by his great Skill in Antient Hiſtory, Geography, and Chronology; he was without doubt a great Eccleſiaſtical Antiquary, and well verſed in the *Fathers* Writings; but then it is as true, that he hath wretchedly perverted them; as, about the *Fall of Man*, the *Nature of Human Souls*, their *Natural Mortality*, the Uſe of *Hades*, the Condition of *Heathens*, the Nature of our *Bodies at the Reſurrection*, &c. In which Matters he makes the Antient Fathers ſpeak his own private Senſe. I can't but take notice, that in his *Diſſertation* on *Cyprian* he holds, that the Number of Martyrs under the firſt Perſecutions was *very ſmall*, which is perfectly againſt the Senſe of the *Fathers*, who tell us that thoſe who ſuffered Death in the Cauſe of the Chriſtian Religion were *very many*. In ſhort, this Writer in his late *Epiſtolary Diſcourſes*, and ſome others before publiſhed, hath broached very wild and extravagant Notions, and makes theſe *Antient Writers* the Authors of them. Under their Patronages he preſents us with ſome of the moſt Heterodox Sentiments that this Age hath known.

There is an other, I mean Mr. *Whiſton*, who hath made the *Antenicene Fathers* the Patrons of his Hereſy; and, under the Pretence and Colour of *reviving Primitive Chriſtianity*, hath done what he can to deſtroy ſome of the Fundamental Doctrines of our Holy Religion. It is from his miſtaken Affection to *Antiquity* that he preſents us with a *Liturgy*, wherein is commended to us *Anointing*

with Oil at Baptiſm, the *Sealing with Ointment*, and the *White Garment*; but he forgot to mention the *Milk*, and *Honey*, and *Spittle*. In the other Sacrament he preſcribes *Oblation* in way of *Sacrifice*, and *Prayers for the Saints departed*. In the Viſitation of the Sick he orders the *Anointing with Oil*, called Extreme Unction. In the Burial Office *Prayers for the Dead* are to be uſed. All this he calls, *The Primitive Standard*, *The Primitive Records of Chriſtianity*, *and Original Chriſtianity*: Whereas he ſhould have looked for theſe in the Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, and not in thoſe of the Degenerated Ages afterwards.

A third, I mean Dr. *Whitby*, in his *Annotations on the New Teſtament*, and in his *Diſcourſes on the Five Points*, endeavours to maintain ſome of the Notions of the *Remonſtrants* by help of ſome Paſſages in the Writings of the *Antient Doctors* of the Church, who having been *Pagan Philoſophers* generally, or at leaſt bred up in thoſe Principles, retained them even after they became *Chriſtians*. But this is not a lawful and fair Way of quoting the *Fathers*, when 'tis known that they ſpeak out of Prepoſſeſſion; and he farther moſt groſsly abuſes the Reader when he peremptorily tells him that *none of the Calvinian Doctrines were held before St. Auguſtine's Time*. Which by the Bye I can't but obſerve is the common Opinion of our Divines, though nothing is more evident than that theſe were the moſt Antient Doctrines of the Chriſtian Churches, but were afterwards Altered and Corrupted, and by ſome of the Fathers in ſome Places of their Writings. Which appears from this, that when St. *Auguſtine* openly profeſſed and maintained theſe Doctrines which we now call *Calvinian*, there was no Commotion or Diſturbance in the Church about them; none of the Orthodox objected againſt them, none complained of them as New and Strange; there were only a few *Frenchmen* at *Marſeilles*,

Marſeilles, known to be *Semipelagians*, that oppoſed them. But this is certain, if theſe Doctrines had been contrary to the Primitive Form of Sound Words, there would have been a great and general Outcry againſt this Father's Writings. Wherefore ſeeing there was no ſuch thing, and ſeeing St. *Jerom*, who was St. *Auguſtine*'s Contemporary, aſſerted and maintained the ſame Doctrines, it is an Argument that theſe were received long before their Time. Nor can we think that That Pious Father would oppoſe the Antient and Orthodox Doctrines of the Church, but rather that he made it his Buſineſs to revive the Old Articles of the *Divine Decrees*, *Original Sin*, *Special Grace*, *Perſeverance*, &c. and to confute the Errours which had crept into the Church about thoſe Points. Which is a farther Proof of what I ſay, That theſe Doctrines have *Antiquity* to vouch them, notwithſtanding the Remonſtrances of Dr. *Whitby* and others to the contrary. It is plain, that theſe Men read the Writings of the Fathers with a private View and Deſign, and make them chime with their own preconceived Notions and Sentiments. And the *Fathers* and *Antiquity* are forcibly and violently preſſed into the Service by them, becauſe they find that theſe are in great Vogue and Veneration, and will help to carry the Cauſe when nothing elſe will. This is near of kin to *Implicit Faith*, which hath done ſuch great Feats in the *Roman* Church. It is a reſigning our Judgements to the Pleaſure of the Antients, for no other Reaſon but becauſe they were born before us, and are our Seniors.

But we may juſtly ſuſpect *ſome* Men who contend ſo fiercely for the Authority of theſe Antients. I take it to be an undoubted Truth, that thoſe who *Exceſſively* cry them up, and ſend us to them as the *beſt Judges* in Points of Religion, ſhew that they are too favourable to the Church of *Rome*;

for 'tis plain, that ſome of thoſe Antient Writers deliver thoſe Things, which may too eaſily be interpreted on the *Roman* Side; and accordingly the Doctors of the Church of *Rome* fly to this Aſylum to defend their Errours. They have good Encouragement from ſome of theſe Writers to aſſert the *Celibacy of the Clergy*, *Purgatory*, *Prayers to* and *for the Dead*, *Superſtitious Faſtings*, the *Efficacy of the Sign of the Croſs*, *Worſhipping of Relicks*, a *Monaſtick Life*, and ſeveral other Things which I have before named. Therefore they believe they do great Feats by alledging the Teſtimonies and Opinions of the *Fathers*; for they think no body will contradict thoſe Good Men who lived in ſome of the firſt Ages of the Church.

I know there are ſome excellent Writers of the *Proteſtant* Communion, as *Whitaker*, *Jewel*, *Willet*, *Forbes*, *Stillingfleet*, *Wake*, and others who have endeavoured to confute the Papiſts from the *Fathers* Writings, and they have done this with ſome good Succeſs; but I conceive not with full Satisfaction to thoſe that are Impartial Readers of the Fathers; for ſuch Perſons can't but know, that the Determinations and Solutions given by the Fathers do often contradict one an other, and ſometimes they favour, yea plainly aſſert the Doctrines of the *Church of Rome*, and at other times they ſpeak the Language of our *Reformers*. So that we can't rely upon the Writings of theſe Antients in the Points controverted between us and them. In ſome Caſes we clearly have them on our Side, and then we make uſe of them, and urge their Teſtimony: But in the very ſame Caſes and many others they differ from us, and even declare againſt us, if I have any Skill in judging concerning the Senſe and Purport of their Writings. How then is it poſſible to determine the Debates that are between us by the Verdict of the *Fathers*. I don't ſee how any Man that hath carefully and impartially peruſed the Fathers,

can

can deny, that they ſometimes ſpeak in favour of thoſe Principles and Practices which at this day we call *Popiſh.* For Abuſes and Superſtitions were entered into the Church in thoſe early Times: The Seeds of thoſe Errours which I have mentioned ſprang up and appeared in the Third Century, but eſpecially in the Fourth, and the ſucceeding one. Wherefore they go the wrong way to work, who, with great Art and Labour, ſtrive to clear all the *Fathers* of thoſe *Popiſh Points*, for it is too true and evident that ſome of them aſſert them. And hence we ſee, that it is giving up the Cauſe to appeal to the *Fathers* here; for the Practices and Doctrines in the Church of *Rome* are generally grounded on ſome Paſſages which they meet with in ſome of thoſe Antient Writers. This is that which foſters Popery, and upholds its Repute among many Perſons, that it is in ſeveral Things conformable to the *Antient* Times, and therefore it is pronounced Good and Laudable.

But 'till we extirpate this Notion, we ſhall never effectually diſcourſe or write againſt the *Roman Church*, we ſhall never be able to baffle their groſs Errours. We muſt be plain with them, and tell them that the *Fathers* were tinctured with ſome Erroneous Sentiments; that thoſe Learned and Holy Men were overſeen and miſtaken in ſome Things, and that their Countenancing of them doth not juſtify the Truth or Lawfulneſs of them. We muſt go this way to work, or elſe we can never vindicate the *Reformation*, elſe we can't poſſibly maintain ourſelves againſt *Popery.* The Neglect of this is one Reaſon why we do ſo little againſt it, why we palliate rather than root out its Errours and Superſtitions. The only effectual way is not to regard the Allegations which are brought from ſome of the Antients, but rather to deſpiſe them. And truly it is a great and juſt Prejudice againſt thoſe Writings, that the Church of *Rome* makes ſo much

much uſe of them, and ſo highly extols them, and prefers them even to the Sacred Scriptures; the Reaſon of which is this, She finds that very many Paſſages in theſe Writings favour her Cauſe, or at leaſt may eaſily be accommodated to it. This teaches *Proteſtants* what is their Duty and Concern; they muſt be cautious when they conſult the Antient Writers of the Church, they muſt by no means advance their Authority to an extravagant Height, for this hath been the Source of the greateſt Miſchief in the Church. Innumerable Follies and Errors, and Superſtitious Rites have been ſwallowed down under the Notion and Pretence of Primitive Antiquity, and the Practice of the Antient Fathers and Writers of the Church.

Notwithſtanding this, we ſee how Men affect to appeal to the Determination of thoſe Antients. We can't but obſerve that this Topick is preſſed with great Vigour and unwonted Zeal of late. We muſt all think and do as our *Forefathers* did, or elſe our Religion ſignifies nothing. It is true, we are bid to *ask for the old Paths*, Jer. xvi. but by them without doubt is meant the Old Law, and the Rules and Practices of the antient *Iſraelites*, as they were adjuſted to that: and ſo proportionably the *Old Paths* now are the Doctrines and Precepts of the Goſpel, and the Religious Practices of the Holy Apoſtles. But theſe are not thought of by our Modern Interpreters of this Text; for they ſend us to the Writings which are ſaid to be written by the Antient Fathers of the Church, but they ſay not a Word of the *Old Paths* of the Apoſtles and Inſpired Writers of the New Teſtament, who are the only Perſons that we can truſt to and confide in for the regulating of our Notions and Practice about Divine Matters.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

VII. AND ſo I paſs to the next Thing which I promiſed to treat of, namely, the *Remedy* againſt the foreſaid Danger and Miſchief. Which in brief is this, To acquaint our ſelves with the *Beſt* and *moſt Valuable Antiquity*, and That is to be found only in the *Bible*. The Antienteſt Standard of Chriſtianity is the Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles. I tender this Advice then to thoſe of the Younger Clergy, that have addicted themſelves to the Study of Divinity, that they would in the firſt place read attentively and diligently the New Teſtament, and out of it (as they go along) collect a Sinopſis or Abſtract of all the *Principles* and *Doctrines* of the Chriſtian Religion contained in thoſe Writings; then all the *Examples*, *Rules*, and *Precepts* that relate to *Practice*, and then all that appertain to *Worſhip*, and laſtly all belonging to *Diſcipline* and *Government* in the Church. Set all theſe down with Exactneſs and Impartiality, and often conſult and review them, and thence you will certainly be informed what JESUS CHRIST the Author of our Religion and his Infallible Apoſtles have taught us concerning theſe ſeveral Heads. When you have done this, then repair to the Writings of the *Fathers* and the Antient Doctors of the Church, peruſe them with great Care, and endeavour to penetrate into the plain and genuine Meaning of them. To which you may be helped by attending to thoſe Directions which ſome of the moſt Learned Writers of the Proteſtant Communion have commended to Students in order to reading the Fathers with Profit and Advantage.

This is the True Order and Method to be obſerved by thoſe who apply themſelves to Divinity: They muſt begin with the *Scriptures*, and then

proceed to the Eccleſiaſtical Volumes. The Neglect of which hath been a great Fault in ſome Students in Divinity, and hath often rendered the Reading of the *Fathers* uſeleſs to them; and ſometimes very dangerous, becauſe (as hath been obſerved before) the Writings of the Fathers favour ſome Opinions which are unſafe. The Want and Omiſſion of this Method, hath been the Source of groſs Miſapprehenſions and Miſtakes in Theology, about ſeveral Conſiderable Articles of our Religion. It is a very Prepoſterous Way to *begin with the Fathers*, and thoſe that have made uſe of it have loſt their Time; for the Fathers can't be read with any Edifying, without the previous conſulting of the Bible, and that with great Care. Some have adviſed the Candidates of Theology to *read downwards* (for which they quote a Great Man of our Church) by which they mean the reading of the Fathers firſt of all, and then later Authors: But truly I look upon thoſe as Bad and Deſigning Men, who put Students upon ſtudying thoſe Antients in the firſt place, as if they intended to have them prepoſſeſſed with Unſafe Notions out of ſome of thoſe Writers, which will be apt to make them pervert the Senſe of the Inſpired Penmen, when they come to read them, and incline them to accommodate the Senſe of the Scriptures to that of the Fathers.

We ſhould therefore firſt look into the Sacred Writings, and conſult the Practice of the Holy Apoſtles in thoſe pure Times of the Goſpel, where we ſhall find no Precedents for Needleſs and Superſtitious Uſages in the Church. Theſe were introduced afterwards, and are *Innovations*. Let us not then be deceived with Novelty diſguiſed with ſeeming Antiquity. Let us not attend to thoſe Men who, with an Ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατέτω, will fetch in what *Rites*, and ſet up what Cuſtoms they pleaſe. But let us apply our ſelves to the True Antiquity, and go to the Top of it, the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and

and the Practice of the Chriſtian Churches in thoſe Times. This is the Antiquity which we ſhould prize, and by which we may ſolidly aſſert and maintain all our Acts of Worſhip and Religion. The Church here Militant muſt be defended by theſe *Veteran* Forces. Here it is certain that what is Antienteſt is Trueſt; and therefore let us adhere to this *Primary Antiquity*. Which if we do, we ſhall cut off all Human Inventions and Superſtitious Rites, though they have a Sort of *Secondary* Antiquity to plead for them. Let us then begin with the Bible (after we have prepared our ſelves, as was ſaid before): And to encourage our ſelves in this Practice, let us conſider theſe two Things, 1ſt, That this is the *Eaſieſt* Way we can take, and 2ly, It is the *Sureſt*.

Firſt, I ſay, it is the *Eaſieſt* Way. We muſt ramble up and down far and near, if we would know what the Sentiment of the Antients was about ſeveral Points of Divinity: We muſt repair to the Eaſtern Churches, and then to the Weſtern ones, and wheel about to the South, and conſult the *African* Churches, and after all this Trouble and Fatigue we ſhall have but little Satisfaction, as I have before proved: Whereas, without all this Roving, we may at home be fully ſatisfied what are the Neceſſary and Eſſential Doctrines of the Chriſtian Religion; for in the New Teſtament we can eaſily find them, and there they are all together, and may be beheld at one View. The Doctrines of the Catholick Church are grounded upon the Scriptures, therefore there we may ſee what they are, and we need go no farther. If we do, we are at a loſs, and we weary our ſelves to no purpoſe in a Wild-gooſe Chaſe. Don't we obſerve that the Judgement of the Antient Doctors of the Church is toſſed up and down? Here one Side claims it, and there an other; and a third would ſnatch it from both.

We

We have a Modern Proof of this before our Eyes. No Man was better skilled in the Writings of the Antient Fathers than the Learned *Petavius*, and yet we ſee what Cenſures are made on his Diſcourſes about the *Trinity*. Some vote him half an *Arian*; others (as Biſhop *Bull*) make his Conduct to be *Popiſh*; it is (ſay they) a Project and Fetch, not to promote the Intereſt of Arianiſm, but that of the Church of *Rome*, by depretiating the Fathers to exalt the Authority and Determination of the *Infallible Judge*. But the Fathers are quoted on both ſides with great Earneſtneſs, though to quite contrary Purpoſes: *Petavius* cites *Juſtin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus of Antioch*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Origen*, *Dionyſius Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and others, to prove that they did not hold the Doctrine of the Trinity according to the Catholick Faith. Biſhop *Bull* maintains the contrary, and quotes theſe very Fathers (as well as all the others) as Aſſerters of the Catholick Doctrine of the Trinity. Then comes one who pretends to *revive the Primitive Chriſtianity*, and he throws aſide above half of the Fathers; for he admits of none but the *Antenicene* ones. So doth Dr. *Clarke*, and yet he frequently quotes Biſhop *Bull*'s Fathers (above thirty Times, ſaith Mr. *Nelſon*) as Patrons of his *Arian* Principles.

Such ſtrange and unaccountable Work is there among theſe that alledge thoſe *Primitive Writers*: They ſweat and toil to get them on their Side; and though they gain them, yet they cannot keep them. But why ſhould we be ſo unwiſe as to put our ſelves to this unneceſſary Trouble? What do we run to the Fathers for? It muſt be either to ſettle our ſelves in the *Neceſſary* and *Fundamental* Doctrines of Religion, or in thoſe that are but *Indifferent*, and of leſſer Moment. As to the Firſt, we have Scriptures to teach us what they are; and whatever is truly delivered by the Fathers concerning

cerning thoſe Neceſſary Points is borrowed from thoſe Inſpired Writings. The Works of the Fathers are not Originals, but Copies, and we are to write after them only ſo far as they agree with the Infallible Writings of the Old and New Teſtament. Theſe are the Originals, and what ever Divine Truths are delivered to us by the Fathers, were borrowed hence: So that *we* may find thoſe Truths here, as well as *they* did, and not be beholden to them for them.

Then as to *Indifferent* Things, as mere Rites and Ceremonies, which are the Matter of ſome of the Writings of the Fathers, we are as able to judge about them as they were. For the Rites are either grounded upon Scripture, or they are not: if they are not, 'tis no matter whether we know what they are or not: if they are, then we can find them in the Scriptures, as well as the Antients have done. And it is much eaſier to find them there, than in ſo many Volumes that go under the Names of the Fathers.

Secondly, This Way which I am commending is not only the *Eaſieſt*, but the *Sureſt*. In the Infallible Scriptures every Thing is True, Certain, and Unqueſtionable, and to be relied upon: but we cannot pronounce the ſame of the Writings of the moſt Celebrated Perſons amongſt the Antient Chriſtians. We know that they ſometimes diſagree with the *Sacred Penmen*; they ſwerve from the original Simplicity of the Goſpel, they make Alterations and Additions in plain Matters of Faith; ſome of them have Falſe Thoughts and Unſound Notions, even about the Eſſential Articles of Religion. It is likewiſe acknowledged that they oftentimes diſagree with themſelves, as is evident, from the Variety of Senſes, which the ſame Perſons give of moſt of the Texts which they have occaſion to expound. Sometimes they forget what they had before delivered, and ſometimes they freely and wil-

willingly diſown and diſapprove of what they had ſaid. We have St. *Auguſtine*'s Book of *Retractations*, which ſhews his Ingenuity in this kind; for there he reviſes his former Writings, and owns the Errours and Lapſes of his Pen. If ſome other Fathers had taken the ſame Courſe, it would have ſaved me the Trouble of making ſome of the Reflections on their Writings. Moreover, they diſagree with *other Fathers*, and are contradicted by them. Some of thoſe Points which they ſay they received from the Apoſtles, were afterwards not thought by ſome of the ſucceeding Fathers to be derived from them. We know, that what was Orthodox amongſt the Fathers for three Centuries together, was in the fourth voted to be wrong and untrue, which mightily ſhocks the Authority of the Antients, and hinders us from relying upon them. Thoſe Practices which were once thought laudable and even neceſſary, were afterwards laid aſide and diſregarded; as Praying in the Poſture of Standing on the Lord's Day, and all the Time between Eaſter and Whitſuntide: Abſtaining from Things ſtrangled and Blood, which was practiſed in the Chriſtian Churches, as *Athenagoras*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and *Minutius Felix* teſtify. It is then unſafe to attribute too much to the Teſtimony of Eccleſiaſtical Writers. Thoſe who do this, do great Service to the Church of *Rome*, and do too plainly declare it.

I will particularly take notice of * one Perſon on this Occaſion, who calls thoſe that pay not extravagant Reverence to the Writings of the Fathers *the blind Worſhippers of the Scriptures*. His Book is one of the greateſt Pieces of Grave Sophiſtry that ever ſaw the Light; and I wonder that a Clergyman, who profeſſes himſelf a Son of the Church of *England*, can ſhew himſelf ſo fa-

* Scrivener Apolog. pro S. Patribus Eccleſ. *&c.*

vourable

vourable to that of *Rome.* He is ſo zealous for his Cauſe, and againſt *Daillé*, that he paſſionately flies out againſt *Luther* and *Calvin*, and every where blackens the *Reformers* and *Proteſtants*, and ſeems to have deſigned his Book as *an Apology for the Church of Rome*, rather than for the *Fathers*, or for the *Church of England.* He ſhews himſelf a bitter Enemy to the *Reformation*, and prefers the State of the Church before the Reformation to that which hath been ſince. In ſhort, he ſhews that he had rather be a Papiſt than a Proteſtant.

There are too many that tread in this Writer's Steps, and by their inſiſting ſo fiercely on Fathers and Councils, they juſtify many of the Abuſes and Corruptions in the Papal Communion. In a Word, moſt of the Confuſions and Diſorders about Religion in Chriſtendom may be imputed partly to this Conduct. Let us then embrace nothing in Chriſtianity, but what we received from the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles: Let the Fathers be no farther liſtened to than they ſpeak agreeably to them. Let Councils and Synods be regulated by theſe, and let us judge of them accordingly, as * two of the moſt Eminent Fathers did, who expreſſed their mean Opinion of Eccleſiaſtical Councils barely conſidered. Hear what *Anthanaſius* ſaid upon occaſion of the *Arians* calling very importunely for a Council; he told them that † the Holy Scripture is ſufficienter and abler than all Councils. And let me freely tell the Reader, that if we appeal to and depend on Councils, we ſhall be inclined to favour the *Arian* Hereſy; for the Councils of *Antioch*, A. D. 345. of *Milan*, A. D. 354. of *Ariminum*, A. D. 369. of *Syrmium*, determined on that Side. If we conſider how Prejudices, Faction, Self-Intereſt, and the Spirit of Contradiction influences on Mens

* Greg. Naz. Epiſt. ad Procop. Auguſtin. cont. Maximin. l. 3. c. 14.
† Ἡ γὰρ ἁγία γραφὴ ἱκανωτέρα πάντων Συνόδων. De Synod.

Minds,

Minds, we cannot ſatisfy our ſelves in any Religious Point *merely* from the Teſtimony and Determination of ſuch Aſſemblies. Beſides, we have plain Examples of Councils contradicting one an other, on which Account their Canons and Decrees are not to be regarded. And add to this what *Bellarmine* himſelf frankly confeſſes, namely that * *the Books and Regiſters of Councils are negligently kept, and they abound with many Faults and Errata's.* How then can we rely upon them?

Hear what Our Church ſaith in her one and twentieth Article: *General Councils may erre, and ſometimes have erred, even in Things pertaining unto God: Wherefore Things ordained by them, as neceſſary unto Salvation, have neither Strength nor Authority, unleſs it may be declared that they be taken out of the Holy Scriptures.* Theſe alone are the Writings wherein are contained the Unerring Schemes of Doctrine, Worſhip, and Diſcipline: and we can admit of no Neceſſary Articles of Religion, unleſs they are taken out hence.

Hear what † Mr. *Chillingworth* ſaith: "There are "Popes againſt Popes, Councils againſt Councils, "ſome Fathers againſt others, the ſame Fathers "againſt themſelves, a Conſent of Fathers in one "Age againſt a Conſent of Fathers of an other Age, "the Church of one Age againſt the Church of an "other Age. Traditive Interpretations of Scripture are pretended, but there are few or none "to be found. No Tradition, but only of Scripture, can derive itſelf from the Fountain, but "may be plainly proved either to have been brought "in ſuch an Age after Chriſt, or that in ſuch an "Age it was not. In a word, there is no Sufficient

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* Libri Conciliorum negligenter conſervati ſunt, & multis vitijs ſcatent. *De Concil. l.* 1. *c.* 2.

† Religion of Proteſtants a ſafe Way to Salvation, *Chap.* 6. *Sect.* 56.

"Cer-

« Certainty but of *Scripture* only, for any conſider-« ing Man to build upon". This Excellent Perſon hath thus briefly delivered what I have been proveing more largely.

But then you will ſay, The *Scriptures themſelves* may be miſinterpreted, as we plainly ſee in the Commentaries and Expoſitions of Papiſts and Sectaries; they groſsly miſtake the True Senſe of them, and inſtead of this impoſe a Falſe one. The Anſwer to this is eaſy and plain, namely, that this Miſinterpretation ariſes not from any Deficiency in the Sacred Writings, but from the Ignorance or Negligence, or wilful Fault of thoſe that read them. Pride and Prejudice, and Siniſter Intereſt will make ſtrange Conſtructions of any Writings. But if you appeal to the *Fathers*, and admit of their Interpretation, will this make the Buſineſs better? Not at all, for it is too manifeſt that they were often acted by Prepoſſeſſion and undue Principles, which we may well excuſe in them, becauſe they were not thoroughly inſtructed, and had not attained to thoſe Diſcoveries which we have ſince been bleſſed with. We cannot but own that the Meaning of ſeveral Paſſages in their Commentaries on the Bible are not clear and plain, but very obſcure and unintelligible; which proceeded partly from this, that they reſted too often in the *bare Words* of Scripture, but did not penetrate into the *Scope* and *Deſign* of the Texts. Wherefore it was excellently ſaid by St. *Chryſoſtom*, Ὅταν τις γνῶ τὸν σκοπὸν τοῦ λέγοντος, καὶ πρὸς τίνας ὁ λόγος, καὶ περὶ τίνων, εὐκρινῆ καὶ ἀσύγχυτον ἀποδίδωσι τῶν λόγων τὴν θεωρίαν; that is, when we know the Scope and Drift of the Speaker, and to whom the Words are directed, and about what, we ſhall be able to give a clear and diſtinct Interpretation of the Words. This he calls in another Place, Τῇ διανοίᾳ προσέχειν τοῦ γράφοντος, attending to the Meaning of the Writer, *Homil. in Galat. cap.* 1. This is a very Uſeful Rule of this Pious Father,

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and it had been well if he and the reſt of the Antients had always obſerved it: It would have prevented many Erroneous Sentiments in their Writings. Wherefore let us make uſe of this Rule when we conſult the Inſpired Writings, and then we ſhall not fail of the True Meaning of them.

CHAP. XIII.

NOW my Advice is that we take care not *to Rely* on thoſe Writings with are blended with Miſtakes and Errours, but let us go to the Fountain-head where we are ſure to have the Purity of Divine Doctrine: *To the Law and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to This, there is no Light in them*, Iſa. viii. 4. where we ſee that this People are not bid to repair to the *Jewiſh Doctors* and *Maſters*, but to the Divine Law itſelf. *It hath been ſaid by thoſe of old* (Gr. *the Antients*) &c. *but I ſay unto you* &c. Matt. v. 21, 22. where we ſee the Antient *Rabbies* and *Fathers* of the *Jewiſh* Church (who anſwer to the Fathers and Doctors of the *Chriſtian* Church) are poſtponed to the Infallible Teacher. This is a plain Parallel of the Caſe before us, and rebukes thoſe who brag that they believe as the Antient Writers have taught them; whereas it is more Reaſonable to ſay, that they believe and are perſuaded as the Divine Writers teach them. *They have Moſes and the Prophets, let them hear them*, Luke xvi. 29. let them give ear to what the divinely Inſpired Writers ſay, and then they can not be impoſed upon.

Search the Scriptures, for they are they that teſtify of me, John v. 39. where we may obſerve that Chriſt ſends them not to the Writings of the Rabbies and the Books of *Jewiſh* Learning, but to the Writings which were dictated by the Holy Spirit. The Chriſtians

Chriſtians of *Beræa ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether thoſe Things were ſo*, Acts xvii. 11. whether what *Paul* and *Silas* preached to them was agreeable to the ſacred Scriptures that were then extant: And for this they were ſtiled *Noble*; that is, their Practice argued a brave and excellent Spirit, and ſuch as became the true Searchers after Truth. But, on the other Hand, it is *Ignoble*, Baſe, and Beggarly, to make other Writings the Standard of our Belief, when we have thoſe to reſt upon which are Infallible. Here we have ſure Footing, here we have a ſolid Baſis, even *the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles*, as it is called, *Eph.* ii. 16.

Conſtantine the Great's Advice at the Council of *Nice* ſhould be now called to mind, *The Books of the Evangeliſts, and Apoſtles, and the Oracles of the old Prophets, plainly inform us, what Apprehenſions we ought to have concerning divine Matters; therefore laying aſide all hoſtile Diſcord, let us decide the Queſtions that are brought before us by the Teſtimony of the divinely inſpired Writings.* Theodoret. Hiſt. Eccl. lib. 1. cap. 7.

That is a notable Paſſage in *Aquinas*, "It is "moſt proper", ſaith he, "to Theology to argue "from divine Authority, becauſe its Principles "come to us from Revelation; and ſo it behoves "us to believe the Authority of thoſe by whom "the Revelation was made. Nor doth this dero-"gate from the Dignity of this Doctrine; for "though an Allegation from Authority, which is "founded on human Reaſon, is very infirm, yet "an Allegation from Authority, which is founded "on divine Revelation, is moſt Valid". *Pars* 1. *Quæſt.* 1. *Artic.* 8.

Our heavenly Maſter, our divine Inſtructor ſurpaſſes all other Teachers: Let us hear him, and him alone: This was the Senſe, Profeſſion, and Language of one of the antient, learnedeſt, and moſt pious Fathers of the Chriſtian Church. And a-

gain, * *If Chriſt alone is to be hearkened to, then we are not to attend to what any of the Antients thought fit to be ſaid or done, but to what Chriſt, who was before all, hath ſaid or done: for we are not to follow the Cuſtom of Men, but the Truth of God.* We pay a due Reſpect to the Writings of the Fathers, we reverence thoſe Antient Monuments, but we are taught not to make them our abſolute Maſters.

But you will ſay, though you make them not your abſolute Maſters, yet we ſhould look upon them as *Interpreters of Scripture*, and the *beſt of Interpreters* of thoſe Sacred Writings, and the Doctrines contained in them. For we ſee, that the different Sects of Chriſtians diſagree about the Meaning of ſeveral Texts of Scripture, and therefore the Writings of the Antient Fathers of the Church are to be conſulted, that from them we may learn to underſtand the true Meaning of the Scriptures, and be no longer divided and diſtracted in our Judgements about the Texts that are controverted. I have anſwered this already, *viz.* That the *Fathers* themſelves differ about the Interpretation of thoſe Places of Scripture, as much as any Parties of Chriſtian Men at this Day. Read *Origen*, read the *Baſils*, read the *Cyrills*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Jerom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtine*, and *Theodoret*, and you will find that there is no Conſent among them in their Expoſitions and Commentaries on the Bible: They have unſafe and unguarded Expreſſions, and not only vary from one another, but from themſelves; what at one time they approve of, at an other time they diſlike: And therefore what is alledged in Favour of the Fathers Interpretations of Scripture falls to the Ground, and is of no Conſequence.

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* Si ſolus Chriſtus audiendus eſt, non debemus attendere quid aliquis ante nos faciendum putaverit, ſed quid qui ante omnes eſt Chriſtus prior fecerat: Neque enim hominis conſuetudinem ſequi oportet, ſed Dei veritatem. *Cyprian*, l. 2. Epiſt. 3.

If you ſtill urge, that we ought to interpret the Scriptures by the Fathers, I muſt tell you, that one who was himſelf the moſt Eminent of the Fathers, ſays otherwiſe; * "We have", ſaith he, "*Cyprian*'s Letters, not as if we thought them to "be Canonical, but we conſider and underſtand "them, by reading thoſe Books which are truly "Canonical", (that is, the Holy Scriptures) "and "we receive and commend what we find there a-"greeable to the Teſtimony and Authority of the "divine Writers; but, by the Author's Leave, we "reject what is diſagreeable". What St. *Auguſtine* here ſaith of *Cyprian*'s Writings, is juſtly to be applied to the Reſt of the Fathers: They muſt be interpreted by the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures by them. *Scripture is the Interpreter of itſelf*, ſay *Chryſoſtom*, Hom. 40. in *Johan.* & in *Pſal.* 3. and *Theodoret* on *Ezek.* 16 chap. This was alſo the Judgement of an older Father than theſe, I mean *Irenæus*, *The lawful and ſecureſt Expoſition of Scripture*, ſaith he, *is according to the Scriptures themſelves.* This muſt needs be ſo, becauſe of the tranſcendent Perfection of the Scriptures, by Vertue of which they explain themſelves; and becauſe I have ſhewn above, that even with Relation to ſome fundamental Doctrines, the Fathers were not wholly free from Errours and Miſtakes. And I have proved, that thoſe Firſt Writers of Chriſtianity had not thoſe Helps and Advantages of underſtanding the Scriptures, that latter Ages have had; ſo that for a conſiderable Time we have had better Interpreters of Scripture than they were. As for their Comments and Expoſitions, our Buſineſs is to compare them with the infallible Canon

* Literas Cypriani non ut Canonicas habemus, ſed eas ex Canonicis conſideramus, & quod in eis divinarum Scripturarum autoritati congruit, cum laude ejus accipimus; quod autem non congruit, cum pace ejus, reſpuimus. *Cont. Creſcon.* lib. 2. cap. 32.

of Scripture, and ſo far as they agree with This, to attend to them, and to eſteem them ſo far as they bear Teſtimony to the Unerring Word of God, and are ſerviceable, on that Account, to confirm and corroborate it. In this Senſe it may be ſaid that the Scriptures are interpreted by the Writings of the Antients. And truly this is the *Right Uſe* of the *Fathers*, and by this Means we give unto them their Due, yet ſo as not to derogate from the Sufficiency of the Scriptures.

I might inſiſt further on this Subject, by letting the Reader ſee what the *Fathers* thought of themſelves and their own Writings, and of thoſe of the other Fathers of the Church who were before them; which will be a great Confirmation of what I have already delivered. At preſent I will only produce the Judgement of that famous Light of the Chriſtian Church, the learned Biſhop of *Hippo*, whom I juſt now cited. To what he there ſaid, I will add what follows: Speaking of his own and other Fathers Writings, he ſaith, * *They are not to be read with a Neceſſity of believing them, but with a Liberty of judging of them.* Again, † *Every Reader and Hearer hath a free Judgement, whereby he may approve of what he likes in the Writings of the Fathers, or diſapprove of what offends him.* Again, || *The Authority of* Cyprian *doth not affright me; for though we know the Merit of that Biſhop and Martyr is great, yet it is not greater than that of* Peter *the Apoſtle and Martyr.* At an other time thus,

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* Hoc genus literarum, non cum credendi neceſſitate, ſed cum judicandi libertate, legendum eſt. *Cont. Donatiſt.* cap. 3.

† Quilibet Lector Auditorve liberum habet judicium, quo in Scriptis Patrum vel approbet quod placuerit, vel improbet quod offenderit. *De Trin.* l. 2.

|| Non me terret auctoritas Cypriani: magnum quidem meritum novimus Cypriani Epiſcopi & Martyris, ſed nunquid majus quàm Petri Apoſtoli & Martyris? *Cont. Donatiſt.* l. 2. c. 1.

§ We

§ *We ought not to look upon the Diſcourſes of the moſt applauded Catholicks as Canonical Scripture, ſo as it ſhall not be lawful for us (ſaving ſtill the Honour that is due to them) to diſlike and reject any Thing, when we find that thoſe Authors have other Sentiments and Opinions than what are adjuſted to Truth.* * *The Church,* ſaith he, *ought not to prefer herſelf before Chriſt, ſeeing he always judges truly and rightly; but Eccleſiaſtical Judges, as being but Men, oftentimes err and are deceived.*

Again, † *We ſo reverence the Monuments of the more pure and learned Antiquity, as not to ſuffer our ſelves to be brought under the Yoke of Bondage, or to believe any Thing, on the Account of any Father's thinking or teaching ſo; but making uſe of that Liberty unto which we are called by the Lord Chriſt, we judge of their Writings according to the Canonical Books, we reverence and praiſe the Writers, when we find them delivering what is agreeable to the Scriptures.* Once more, || *The Fathers were not willing that their Writings ſhould be eſteemed as Oracles, but they ſubmitted them to the Judgement of thoſe who could think and judge aright.* Thus we

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§ Neque enim quorumlibet diſputationes, quamvis Catholicorum & laudatorum hominum, velut Scripturas Canonicas habere debemus, ut nobis non liceat, ſalvâ honorificentiâ quæ illis debetur hominibus, aliquid in eorum ſcriptis improbare atque reſpuere, ſi forte invenerimus quòd aliter ſenſerint quàm Veritas habet. *Epiſt.* 3. ad Fortunatian.

* Non debet Eccleſia ſe Chriſto præponere, cum ille ſemper Veraciter judicet; Eccleſiaſtici autem judices, ſicut homines, plerumque falluntur. *Cont. Creſcon.* l. 2. c. 21.

† Ita veteris purioris & eruditioris Antiquitatis Teſtimonia veneramur, ut tamen jugo ſervitutis nos implicari non patiamur, aut ideo aliquid credamus quòd ex Patribus quiſpiam ita vel ſenſerit vel docuerit, ſed libertate, in quam à Domino vocati ſumus, utentes, de quorumcunque Scriptis ſecundùm Literas Canonicas liberè judicamus: Quod Scripturarum authoritati congruit, cum reverentiâ & laude eorum accipimus. *Cont. Creſcon.* cap. 31.

|| Nec ipſi Patres ſcriptà ſua pro Oraculis haberi voluerunt, ſed dextrè judicantium & ſentientium judicio ſubmiſerunt. *Epiſt.* 19. ad Hieronym.

ſee what was the Opinion of this Great Man and Father of the Chriſtian Church, concerning the Antient Writers: And ſurely we are taught by this free and ingenuous Confeſſion, how to form our Apprehenſions concerning thoſe Antients and their Works; that is, that as we ſee Occaſion, and as Reaſon ſhall dictate to us, we may embrace the Opinions of thoſe Primitive Doctors, or we may diſallow of them: And this we are authorized to do by Leave from thoſe Writers themſelves.

And further, I would obſerve this, that the Writers of the *Roman* Church, who, of all others, profeſs themſelves to be the greateſt *Admirers* of the Antient *Fathers* and their Writings, and even to Exceſs extoll them, do, *when they pleaſe*, as extravagantly depretiate them, and labour to depreſs their Credit. One of the Chief of them determines a Queſtion contrary to the Senſe of ſeveral of the Fathers, and then adds, * *Some will ſay, Is not this Diſſenting from, and even Oppoſing of ſo many Antient Authors, who are famous for their Learning and Sanctity, to be accounted a very raſh Thing?* He anſwers, *No not at all.* An other fierce Advocate for the Antients, when he thinks fit, at an other time tells us, † That *they bring forth Monſters.* The *Schoolmen* are not ſatisfied about the Senſe of the Fathers; one Sect of them ſaith their Meaning is this, an other ſaith it is that, a Third and a Fourth differ from both of them; and yet they all of them ſay, nay boaſt, that they have the Conſent and Suffrage of the Fathers. Whoever is acquainted with the Writings of *Cajetan*, *Gregory de Valentiâ*, *Coſter*, *Ribera*, *à Caſtro*, *Salmeron*, *Maldonate*,

* Dicet aliquis, tot Auctoribus tam antiquis, tantâ doctrinâ & ſanctitate nobilitatis diſſentire & adverſari, nonne Temerarium judicari debet? Minimè verò. *Perer. in Gen.* l. 3. qu. 5.

† Monſtra quandoque pariunt. *Melch. Canus* in Loc. Theolog. lib. 7. cap. 3.

Serarius,

Serarius, *Azorius*, &c. will acknowledge that they value not the Sentiments of the Fathers, but reject them with Scorn and Diſdain, as often as they pleaſe. And this may be obſerved even in their great Champion, the famous Cardinal, who generally cries up the Fathers at an extravagant Rate, and yet no Man ſlights them more than He *. If we peruſe this Author's Writings, we ſhall find that there is ſcarcely any one of the Fathers of the Church, whom he hath not at one time or other found Fault with, and rejected his Opinion.

And may not we *Proteſtants* be permitted to uſe the like Liberty, and (with greater Reaſon than the *Papiſts*) diſlike ſome Parts of the Doctrine and Practice allowed of by the Antient Writers? Yes, ſurely, and there is good Ground for it, if what I have above ſuggeſted hath any Weight in it. Let me not be cenſured, though I ſhould be ſo bold as to ſay, that we ſhould have underſtood the Scriptures much better if we had not had the Writings of the Fathers; for they have obſcured and depraved them by their different and contrary Comments: They have raiſed Controverſies, they have taught Men to quarrel and diſpute about the Senſe of many Texts, which otherwiſe are plain and obvious, and about ſeveral Matters of Practice relating to Church-Affairs, which are evident enough in themſelves, ſome of which are ſuperſtitious. It would trouble one to hear this idle and weak Way of talking; Such a Father, ſuch an Antient Writer ſaid ſo, and did ſo and ſo; therefore we muſt give Credit to it, and act according to it: Whereas the Language ſhould be, Such an

* In graviſſimos errores aliquando nonnulli inciderunt. *Bellarm.* de Verbo Dei. l. 3. c. 3. Conſtat quoſdam ex præcipuis eorum non leviter in quibuſdam lapſos. *c.* 10. Non poſſumus ex Patrum ſententiis aliquid certi colligere, quando inter ſe non conveniunt. *De Euchariſt.* l. 4. c. 10.

Evangeliſt, ſuch an Apoſtle, ſuch an Inſpired Writer ſaid ſo; and the Apoſtles and Chriſtians, whoſe Actions are recorded in the New Teſtament, did thus and thus. If we do not diſcourſe thus, we deceive ourſelves, and we debaſe and ſink the Authority of the Scriptures. Yea indeed, by this over-valuing the Authority of the Antients, and their Writings, we enervate and overthrow the Primitive Purity and Native Simplicity of Chriſtianity, and we take a Courſe to nouriſh fond Credulity and Blind Compliance with Errour. Many have fled to the *Fathers* Writings to conceal their own Ignorance; when they could give no Account of the Points they treated of, they thought it was ſufficient to uphold their Credit by quoting the Antient Writers, who have been in great Repute, and have been thought to be infallible Dictators. Thus we are fooliſhly betrayed into Miſtakes.

As for Matter of Fact, it is not to be denied that thoſe, who lived at the Time or very near the Time when the Things were done, are the moſt likely and proper Perſons to give an Account of thoſe Things, if it could be proved that they took great care to inform themſelves aright: But we plainly ſee that ſome of the Antient Writers were not diligent enough in enquiring into the true and exact Accounts of Things, but inſtead of that contented themſelves with a ſuperficial Notice of them, and were careleſs, and took Things upon Truſt. Wherefore, tho' there is nothing more common than to make uſe of the Fathers Names and Teſtimonies, yet we have reaſon to conclude that nothing is more Uncertain and Precarious.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

NOW, in the laſt place, I will beſtow an Anſwer on an *Objection* which hath been frequently made uſe of againſt ſome Part of what hath been advanced in the foregoing Diſcourſe. Mr. *Reeve*, and others before him, inſiſt much upon *Vincentius Lirinenſis*'s Maxim; *Tenendum eſt quod ubique, quod ſemper, quod ab omnibus creditum eſt.* And they make this the Great Rule of Faith and Orthodoxy, becauſe (ſay they) all the Fathers in all Places and at all Times unanimouſly agreed to maintain the ſame Articles of Religion.

Not to obſerve here, that *Vincentius Lirinenſis*, who was a *French* Monk, and lived at the latter end of the 5th Century, was half a *Pelagian*, as the Learned *Voſſius* (in his *Pelagian* Hiſtory) gives us good Ground to believe; I will betake my ſelf to ſhew the Invalidity of the foreſaid Maxim.

Firſt, This is evident from the Old *Millenary* Opinion, from the current Doctrine of *Angels Debauching of Women*, and accordingly interpreting that Text *Gen.* vi. 2. from the Giving the Euchariſt to Infants, from the *Abſtaining from Blood and Things ſtrangled*, from *the Election of Biſhops and Presbyters by the People*, as well as by the Clergy. All which Opinions and Practices generally prevailed in the Chriſtian Church, and laſted three hundred Years at leaſt: So that the Perſons who lived in thoſe Times might preſume to ſay, that theſe Doctrines and Practices prevailed in the Church *every where*, and *always*, and were *allowed of by all Chriſtian Men*; but we know that they have ſince been owned to be *Falſe* and *Unwarrantable*; which plainly confutes *Vincentius*'s Rule, which he ſo highly magnifies, and would thruſt upon us as Infallible.

And

And Mr. *Reeve* imagines, that the foreſaid Maxim comes near to his Purpoſe, and indeed to the very Thing which he would put upon the Reader, namely, that there hath been an Univerſal Conſent amongſt the *Fathers* of the Church *at all Times* and *in all Places* about all Religious Doctrines and Practices, and therefore we are entirely to ſubmit our ſelves to their Conduct: Which is ſomething like that groundleſs Notion which *Bellarmine* maintains and often repeats; * *Though ſome of the Fathers erre in ſome Points, yet they never all agree together in the ſame Errour.* Which is clearly baffled by what hath been already mentioned, namely, the General and Unanimous Conſent of the Fathers, for ſome Centuries, concerning the Truth of thoſe Doctrines which were condemned as Falſe by the Fathers that came afterwards. But as there was a General Conſent for a time in ſome Things, ſo in others it is impoſſible to find it, and it is in vain to expect an Univerſal Concurrence. Accordingly I here challenge any Man to prove, that *all the Fathers* did continually agree in any one Doctrine, Practice, or Uſage relating to Religion, excepting ſome Articles that are Fundamental; and even in ſome of them I have ſhewed that ſome of the Fathers are not ſound and orthodox.

Secondly, I prove the Invalidity of *Vincentius's* Maxim from the Complaint which Dr. *Cave* juſtly makes in his Epiſtle before his *Antiquitates Chriſtianæ*, *There are* (ſaith he) *only ſome few ſcattered Handfuls of the Primitive Writings left: So fatally miſchievous was the Careleſſneſs of thoſe who ought to have been the Guardians of Books and Learning in their ſeveral Ages, in ſuffering the Records of the Antient Church to periſh. We have been robbed of the Records of the*

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* Et ſi erraverint aliqui Patrum in quibuſdam dogmatibus; nunquam tamen omnes ſimul in eodem errore convenerunt. *De Verbo Dei non Scripto. l. 4. c. 7. Controverſ. l. 2. de Chriſto. cap. 2.*

Firſt

Firſt Times of Chriſtianity, whereof ſcarce any Foot-ſteps do remain. And in his *Preface* to his *Antiquitates Apoſtolicæ*, he laments *the irreparable Loſs of the Primitive Records, which the Injury of Time hath deprived us of; the Subſtance being gone, and little left us but the Shell and Carcaſs.* Now ſeeing many of the Fathers Writings have not come to our hands, but are quite periſhed, it is impoſſible to know what was contained in thoſe Writings, and what Turn their Thoughts took in them. And here by the way let me ſuggeſt, that perhaps it is by the Particular and Over-ruling *Providence* of God that there are ſo few Antient Writings left, that thereby the *Authority of the Holy Scriptures* may be more attended to, and relied upon by us.

Tatian writ a vaſt many Books, as * *Irenæus* teſtifies. And as for *Irenæus* himſelf, † *Jerom* mentions the Names of ſeveral Books that he writ, which are not extant at this day. *Hegeſippus* was a great Eccleſiaſtical Writer, as we are informed by ‡ *Euſebius*, but we have nothing now but ſome Fragments of his preſerved by the foreſaid *Euſebius.* We have not all *Athanaſius*'s Writings, for ſome are taken notice of by *Jerom* which are wanting now. And the § ſame Perſon tells us that *Origen* writ above a thouſand Tractates and Commentaries, though at this Day we have but few of them. He acquaints us that *Euſebius* writ an infinite number of Volumes, but the number is ſince diminiſhed. According to *Caſſiodorus* and *Trithemius* ſome Treatiſes of St. *Jerom* are miſſing. And I could from good Authority obſerve the like concerning the Writings of *Cyprian* and other Fathers. So that we cannot but conclude hence that the Suffrage of the Fathers about any Point is *lame* and *imperfect*, and we have no Reaſon to rely upon it; and con-

* Adv. Hær. l. 1. c. 31. † De Scriptorib. Eccleſ.
‡ Hiſt. Eccl. l. 4. c. 8. § De Script. Eccleſ.

ſequently

ſequently *Vincentius*'s *Quod ubique* &c. is mere Banter.

Again, *Thirdly*, This will appear yet more reaſonable, if we conſider that ſeveral of the Fathers Writings which we have now in our hands are Counterfeit, and not Genuine; (which hath been more than once ſuggeſted in the foregoing Diſcourſe); as *Hermes*'s *Paſtor*, which conſiſts of Dreams and feigned Viſions, and therefore is diſallowed of by *Tertullian*, *Athanaſius*, *Jerom*, *Gelaſius*, and is doubted of even by * *Bellarmine* and † *Baronius*. *Euſebius* allows of but one Epiſtle of *Clement* to the *Corinthians*, but rejects the other. His *Recognitions* are condemned as Spurious even by *Roman* Authors, and ſo are the *Conſtitutions* in part by ſome of them, though Mr. *Whiſton* cries up their Credit, and hath the Confidence to make them the principal Part of the Canon of Scripture. *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles are owned by the Judicious to be adulterated and interpolated. The Writings of *Dionyſius the Areopagite* are proved to be Fictitious by *Cajetan*, *Sixtus Senenſis*, *Laurentius Valla*, *Theodore Gaza*, *Eraſmus*, *Caſaubon*, and they aſſign very ſufficient Reaſons for it. Some of thoſe Books which go under *Juſtin Martyr*'s Name are none of his, if we may credit very Learned Papiſts, as well as Proteſtants. *Tertullian*'s Book of the *Trinity* is ſuppoſititious, ſaith ‡ *Jerom*. And ſome other Pieces that bear his Name are queſtioned by other Writers of good Note. Moſt of the Works that are aſcribed to *Origen* are counterfeit, according to the Judgement of Criticks. Above twenty Treatiſes attributed to *Cyprian* are cenſured as ſpurious by § *Bellarmine*: and *Rufinus* long before had complained, that the Writings of this Father were corrupted and adulterated. Several of St. *Jerom*'s Commentaries,

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* De Scrip. Eccleſiaſt. † A. D. 159.
‡ Adv. Rufin. l. 2. c. 5. § De Script. Eccleſ.

Letters

Letters and Epiſtles are owned by the Learned to be ſuppoſititious. Several of the Sermons and Diſcourſes that paſs under *Chryſoſtom*'s Name are none of his; which *Du Pin* and other Criticks gather from the Stile of them, and other conſiderable Arguments: The Liturgy which is attributed to this Father is by ſeveral judicious Writers voted to be Spurious; for the Rites and Ceremonies which are there mentioned, eſpecially thoſe about the Euchariſt, were not in Uſe in his Time. *Auguſtine*'s Works are more numerous than any of the other Fathers; yet ſome are added to them that are written by others. The Learned of both Communions ſay the ſame of *Ambroſe*'s Works. How then is it poſſible to tell what was the *Univerſal Conſent* of the Fathers, or (which amounts to the ſame thing) of the Church in thoſe Times!

And we know that there was a Time when the Complaint was, *Athanaſius contra totum mundum*, &c. and the *whole World groaned under Arianiſm*, as *Jerom* expreſsly ſaith, *Ingemuit totus orbis, & Arianus ſe eſſe miratus eſt.* Dialog. cont. Luciferian. And it is acknowledged by *Vincentius Lirinenſis* himſelf, *Arianorum venenum penè orbem totum contaminaverat.* cap. 6. The Hereſy, as well as the Schiſm of the *Donatiſts*, (for St. *Auguſtin* charges them with both) was ſpread over the greateſt Part of *Africa*. What ſhall we think then of the Validity of the Notion of *Univerſal Conſent* in thoſe Days? Surely *Vincentius Lirinenſis*'s Rule did not hold good then about the *Univerſality* of *Time*, *Place* and *Perſons*. It was no Rule to judge of Truth by. And is it not well known that the Church of *Rome* hath ſeparated itſelf from the Churches of *Aſia* and *Africa*, and all thoſe in the Eaſtern and Northern Parts of *Europe*, and at this Day from the *Greek* and *Armenian* Churches, and thoſe of the *Abyſſines*? So that it appears that the univerſally Concurrent Teſtimony of all Churches every where and at all times

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is a mere Sham. Hear what Mr. *Thorndike* ſaith, who was a great Aſſerter of the *Authority of the Fathers: It is well enough known*, ſaith he, *that there are many Queſtions, in which though there may be ten Fathers alledged on one ſide, yet there may be more alledged on the other Side.* Epilog. book 1. chap. 7. And he had before owned, chap. 5. that the Authorities of Church-Writers (if they ſhould agree) cannot be conſidered any otherwiſe than as the *Opinions of Particular Perſons*, which no ways import the *Conſent of the Whole Church.* This is ſo Evident, that I need not inſiſt upon it, and particularly ſhew the Folly of the Popiſh Doctors in ſtifly maintaining *Vincentius*'s Rule as an undeniable Article.

After all, we may obſerve, that though there were many *Hereticks* in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, and many *Books* writ and publiſhed by them, yet there is not one of them remaining, we have not one entire Volume left of all their Writings: What we know of their Opinions, we have only from the Books of thoſe Perſons who writ againſt them; and I have ſhewed that ſeveral of thoſe Books are of little Credit.

If we lay all theſe Things together, we cannot poſſibly retain any great Eſteem of the Authority of ſome of the Antient Fathers, and we muſt look upon *Vincentius*'s Rule as an Utopian Fancy.

I wonder therefore, that any Perſons of Good Senſe and Judgement can prevail with themſelves to preſs that Rule upon us, and earneſtly to call upon us to direct all our Opinions and our Faith, and to govern all our Practices by the Writings of the Fathers. They tell us, that becauſe Men are Strangers to thoſe Primitive Writers and to Antiquity, therefore they have falſe Conceptions of Things, therefore they run into Errour, therefore their Lives are bad, therefore they are Schiſmaticks and Rebels; for one main Effect of valuing and prizing

prizing the Fathers is Holineſs of Life. Thus * one of late harangues on this Subject; and truly we ſhould be glad to ſee that thoſe who ſo value the Fathers are Better Livers than their Neighbours, as well as more obſervant of the received Articles and Doctrines of the Firſt Chriſtians.

However, my Buſineſs is not, and never was, to diſparage the Fathers, and their Writings, which on ſeveral reſpects are to be Eſteemed (as I have particularly ſpecified before); but That which I urge is This only, that we ought not to *Over-value* them, and as it were to Idolize them, by making them the Chief Standard of our Faith and of our Practice in all things. Nothing can be more unaccountable, unreaſonable, and even ridiculous than this. We are to give our Aſſent to the Inſpired Writings *Abſolutely* and without Reſerve, and for their Own Sake; but we muſt embrace the Sentiments of the Fathers for the Sake of the Inſpired Penmen, and ſo far only as they Agree with them. We cannot reaſonably make thoſe Judges in Matters of Religion, who we know have frequently fallen into Errours: which is the Caſe of the Perſons we are ſpeaking of. I have abundantly proved in the preceeding Papers that many things done in the Times neareſt to the Apoſtles are uncertainly delivered by them; and that they are defective in the Hiſtorical, Doctrinal, and Practical Part of Religion; and that we, who are removed ſo many Ages from the Fathers, are more able to judge of thoſe Things than they were. Wherefore, when ſome Men make it their Buſineſs to rattle in our Ears with the Names of the *Fathers*, the *Fathers*, and think to ſtunn and amuſe us with this loud and repeated Noiſe, let us take care it make no undue Impreſſion upon us, nor be accompanied with Ill Effects. To conclude; this my preſent Task was

* Mr. *Reeve* in his Preface to his Tranſlations.

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undertaken upon a View of thoſe Miſchievous Effects of the Immoderate Regard which is paid at this day to the Dictates of ſome of the Antient Writers of the Church; for this is grown up to be the Common Refuge of Ignorance and Blind Devotion, the Bulwark of Superſtition and Bigotry, the Abettor of Unwarrantable Zeal, the great Supporter of Falſe and Miſtaken Notions and Corrupt Sentiments about Religion, and even Chriſtianity itſelf, and laſtly the Advancer of Unjuſtifiable Practices and Manners in the Lives of Men.

AN

AN INDEX OF

The AUTHORS, mentioned in this Book, who have freely cenſured the Writings and Conduct of ſome of the ANTIENT FATHERS, and would by no means allow them to be the Standard of Religious Sentiments or Practices in the Church.

ST. CYPRIAN: *His Epiſtles.*

EUSEBIUS: *Eccleſ. Hiſt.*

GREGORY NAZIANZEN: *Epiſt ad Procop.*

St. JEROM: *His Commentaries.*

St. AUGUSTINE: *Cont. Maximin. l.* 3. *c.* 14. *Contr. Creſcon. l.* 2. *c.* 21, 32. *Contr. Donatiſt. c.* 3. *De Trinit. l.* 2. *Epiſt.* 111. *ad Fortunatian.*

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Mr. NELSON: *Life of Biſhop Bull.*

The CHURCH OF ENGLAND: *Article* 21.

A

DISCOURSE

OF

EPISCOPACY:

Wherein this Queſtion is reſolved,

Whether in the Primitive Times there was a *Diſtinct Order* of *Biſhops* different from that of *Presbyters*, or whether all Miniſters were *Equal*.

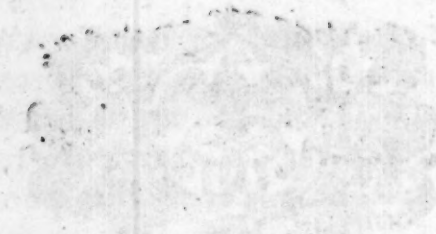
WHICH

Will yeild a full Anſwer to all that hath been written in defence of MODERN EPISCOPACY.



LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR M.DCC.XXX.



A

DISCOURSE

OF

EPISCOPACY.

CHAP. I.

THE Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles muſt decide this Controverſy, and therefore I will *principally* make my Appeal to them, and diſcourſe from what is plainly expreſſed in thoſe Sacred Records. I will firſt argue from the Words and *Terms themſelves*; and therefore my firſt Argument is this, Thoſe Terms *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* are attributed to the ſame Perſons in the New Teſtament; therefore a *Biſhop* and a *Presbyter* are the ſame. For Things and Perſons are *differenced* by the *Names* that they bear; and conſequently thoſe Things and Perſons that have the *ſame Names*, are rightly judged to be the *ſame Things* and *Perſons*. Here, for the Satisfaction of the *Critical Reader*, and to make way for what follows, Firſt,

I will ſpeak of the Terms or Names of *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* as to their *bare Signification* and *Acception* in *Greek* Authors; and afterwards I will conſider them as they are reſtrained in the *New Teſtament*, and applied to that Order of Perſons we are now diſcourſing of, and proſecute the Argument taken from the Names that are given to that Order.

Firſt, for the bare Names: The Word ἐπίσκοπος, is often uſed by the LXX, and is differently applied: For ſometimes this Word denotes a Military Perſon, as in *Numb.* xxxi. 14. ἐπίσκοποι τῆς δυνάμεως, *the Officers of the Hoſt*, as we render it: and it may bear that Senſe in *Judg.* ix. 28. and thus 'tis without Controverſy to be underſtood in 2 *Kings* xi. 15. At other times it is uſed to ſignify the chief Workmen and Surveyors that are employed about Building, as in 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 12, where ἐπίσκοποι is rendered by our Tranſlators *Over-Seers*. It is alſo applied to Eccleſiaſtical Perſons; thus we read of ἐπίσκοπος *the Over-Seer of the Levites*, *Neh.* xi. 22. and the Chief Officers in the Miniſtry of the Tabernacle and Temple are ſtiled ἐπίσκοποι, *Numb.* iv. 16. 2 *Kings* xi. 18. And other Places might be produced, from which it is manifeſt that ἐπίσκοπος and ἐπίσκοποι are Words made uſe of to ſignify any Perſons that have a Charge and Overſight of Buſineſs in any Office or Employment whatſoever, and they anſwer to the *Hebrew* Words פקד and פקדים.

Next, let us ſee how the Word is uſed among the *Gentile* Writers. Among them alſo we ſhall find that it was the Common Name for any ſort of Over-Seer, any one that is ſet up above others in any kind, whether Military, Civil, or Eccleſiaſtical; and generally it was a Word of Honour and Reſpect. *Heſychius* notes that it is applied to Kings, and was the uſual Title of the Civil Magiſtrates in *Greece*; whence perhaps it was that

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Conſtantine the Great terms himſelf * Ἐπίσκοπον. The Civil Court of *Areopagus* was called † ἡ ἄνω βουλὴ καὶ ἐπίσκοπος πάντων, the Supreme Senate, and the Over-Seer or Controller of all others. This was alſo a Martial Word among the *Grecians*, or at leaſt applied to Martial Men: So *Hector* is called by his Spouſe *Andromache* § ἐπίσκοπος, which is as much as the Defender and Protector, or the Great Champion of *Troy*. Any Publick Officers among the *Athenians* were called by this Name: thus *Suidas* tells us, that the Perſons whom the *Athenians* ſent abroad to overſee and take an account of the Cities which were in their Juriſdiction, and to look after and tranſact the Publick Affairs there, were called || ἐπίσκοποι. The *Grecians* attributed this Title ſometimes to their *Gods*, as we may ſee in *Homer* and *Plutarch*, and to thoſe Perſons whom they accounted Sacred. *Mercury* is called by the latter ἐπίσκοπος ἀγοραζόντων, the Tradeſmen's God, the Preſident of Merchandize: And by the *Greek* Epigrammatiſt he is ſtiled ἐπίσκοπος ἀθλητῶν, the Patron of the Wreſtlers. According to *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Numa*, the High Prieſt of the *Romans* was τῶν παρθένων ἐπίσκοπος, Keeper of the Virgins. From *Pollux* we learn that the Inſpectors and Regulators of the Olympick Games and Prizes were termed ἐπίσκοποι by the *Greeks*. I might add that ἐπίσκοποι (Hom. Il. 22.) are *Sponſores*, *fidejuſſores fœderum*. And ‡ *Euſtathius* informs us that ſometimes ἐπίσκοπος is the ſame with κατάσκοπος a Spy or Scout.

Among the *Romans* likewiſe (who borrowed from *Grecce* ſeveral Words, as well as Things) *Epiſcopus* was in uſe, and much after the ſame manner as among the *Grecians*, that is, to ſignify one in a conſiderable Poſt and Office. Thus ** *Tully*

* Euſeb. in vit. Conſtant. l. 4. † Plutarch. in Solone. § Il. ω.
|| Ἔφοροι was a Word of the ſame Import as to the bare Derivation, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐφορᾶν, ab inſpiciendo.
‡ In Il. κ. ** Ad Attic. l. 7. Epiſt. 11.

ſaith, that *Pompey* would have made him ἐπίσκοπον *ad quem delectus & ſumma negotii referatur*, an Overſeer, and a kind of a Plenipotentiary in *Campania*, and the Maritime Parts. According to the *Roman* Lawyers, in the *Pandects* *, *Epiſcopi* are thoſe *qui præſunt pani, & cæteris venalibus rebus quæ civitatum populis ad quotidianum victum uſui ſunt.* They are Overſeers of the Corn and other Commodities of the Market, and may be called the Clerks of the Market. And perhaps *Tully* was to have been ſuch an Officer in *Campania* in the Time of the Civil War, though he ſeems to repreſent it in higher Terms.

From the *Gentiles* the *Greek* Word, ἐπίσκοπος, and the *Latin*, *Epiſcopus*, came into the *Church*, and was uſed in the New Teſtament, and in Eccleſiaſtical Writers. In the Former (excepting only one Place, 1 *Pet.* ii. 25. where God himſelf is ſaid to be *the Biſhop of our Souls*; becauſe He in the moſt eminent Manner takes Care of, and conſults the Welfare of our Souls) it is always appropriated to the *Miniſters of the Goſpel*, and ſo is ἐπισκοπὴ applied to an *Eccleſiaſtical Office* or Charge. And ſo, in all Church-Writers, a *Biſhop* is a Spiritual Officer in the Church of Chriſt, an Evangelical Paſtor, whoſe Office I have deſcribed before. This is the limited Senſe of the Word *Biſhop*, after the ſeveral Acceptions of it, which have been premiſed.

Next, I will enquire into the Acception of the Word πρεσβύτερος, *Presbyter* or *Elder*. And here I will obſerve the ſame Order that I did before, taking notice of the Denotation of the Word, firſt in the *Old Teſtament*, then among the *Gentile Writers*, and laſtly, in the *New Teſtament*. In the LXX's Tranſlation of the Old Teſtament, the Word πρεσβύτερος, which anſwers to the *Hebrew* זקן *Zaken*, is firſt uſed to ſignify thoſe that are venera-

* Tit. de Muneribus & honoribus.

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ble for their *Age*, thoſe that are far advanced in *Years*. Thus *Abraham* and *Sarah* are called πρεσβύτεροι, *Gen.* xviii. 11. And in this Senſe the Word πρεσβύτερος is taken in *Gen.* xix. 4. So the *Elders*, in *Gen.* xxxii. 7. are antient Men. And πρεσβύτερος is explained by πλήρης ἡμερῶν, *full of Days*, Gen xxxv. 39. *Thou ſhalt honour the Face of the* πρεσβύτερος, *the old Man*, Lev. xix. 32.

Secondly, The Word *Zaken*, *Presbyter*, and ſo πρεσβύτερος, is a Title of Honour given to Great and Eminent Men, ſuch as are in Power and Authority. Thus we read of *Zekinim*, the *Elders of Iſrael*, the *Elders of the People*, Exod. xiii. 16, 18. xii. 21. xviii. 12. xix. 7. and in many other Places, where generally the Word is πρεσβύτεροι. *Gen.* l. 7. there is mention made of the *Elders of the Land of Egypt*. In the ſame Verſe *Pharaoh*'s Chief Attendants are called πρεσβύτεροι τῆ οἴκε αὐτῦ. So the Steward of *Abraham*'s Houſe, *who ruled over all that he had*, hath the Title of πρεσβύτερος τῆς οἰκίας, *Gen.* xxiv. 2. In *Judges* viii. 14. οἱ ἄρχοντες, and οἱ πρεσβύτεροι, the *Princes* and the *Elders of Succoth*, explain one an other. In *Judges* xi. 7. we read of the *Elders of Gilcad*; and in *Judges* viii. 16. *Ruth* iv. 2. *Ezr.* x. 14. of the *Elders of the City*, i. e. the chief Men and Rulers of the City. *The Elders that ſit in the Gates*, Deut. xxv. 27. Prov. xxxi. 23. are thoſe that preſide in Courts of Judicature. And not only eminent Men in a ſecular Capacity are honoured with the Name of *Elders*, but ſometimes, by this Title, are meant thoſe who have ſome Hand in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, as I ſhewed before. For as *Cohen* is the Word in the * Old Teſtament for a *Civil Officer*, a Chief Miniſter of State, a Ruler, and yet withall is the known Word for a *Prieſt*, one that miniſters in Sacred Things; ſo the

* 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. xx. 26. 1 *Kings* iv. 5. *Job* xii. 19.

Hebrew

Hebrew Word for an *Elder* denotes a Perſon in both thoſe Capacities.

If we enquire into the Uſage of the Word πρεσβύτερος and *Senior*, and other Words that refer to *Old Age*, among the *Ethnic* Writers, we ſhall find there alſo that theſe are Names of Honour and Dignity, and are applied to Magiſtrates and Chief Rulers, and always to Perſons of Eminency. The Reaſon at firſt might be, becauſe Men of *Age* are generally Perſons of more than ordinary Experience, Prudence, and Gravity, and were advanced to publick Stations, and Poſts of Honour. And ſince, when even Men of younger Years are promoted to Magiſtracy and Dignity, the Name of πρεσβύτερος, or *Elder*, ſtill remains in Uſe. And this is no unuſual Thing, for the Names of Things or Perſons to continue, notwithſtanding the firſt Ground or Occaſion of them ceaſes. As we ſee in innumerable Inſtances among ourſelves; I will mention but one. The Service, which is called *Soccage*, was a Tenure by the *Plough*, and had thence its Denomination; but though this Service hath for a long time ceaſed, being changed into an annual Rent of Money, yet ſtill our Lawyers call it *Soccage*: And all Tenures that are not by Knight-Service, are Tenures by *Soccage*. So here the old Title, taken from the *Age* of Perſons, is kept up, though the Ground and Reaſon of it is not continued. Πρεσβύτερος, and *Presbyter*, which at firſt referred to the *Years* of Men (becauſe they were elderly Men that were choſen into publick Office) have now no Reference at all to any ſuch Thing, but relate only to the Dignity and Honour conferred upon them. Thus it was among the *Greeks* and *Romans*: The Magiſtrates among the former, were ſtiled *Elders* by *Demoſthenes*: And γερουσία was the common Word for the Great Aſſembly of their Chief and Ruling Men. We learn from *Homer*, that γέροντες was uſed to ſignify the Topping Men among the *Grecians*,

Il.

II. σ. So *Ariſtotle* mentions the γέροντες of the *Lacedemonians*, *Politic.* l. 2. c. 9. and of the *Cretians*, c. 8. And then it is no Wonder that *Archigerontes* was a Word for Great Officers in the Imperial Court, *Cod.* l. *de Epiſc.* And among the *Romans* were the *Senators* and the *Senate:* And ſo *Signor* and *Signeur* among the *Italians*, *Spaniards*, and *French*, are Terms of Reſpect and Honour. *Ealderman* (*Alderman* now we pronounce it) was a Word among the *Anglo-Saxons* for a Magiſtrate, one that preſided in a City or Province over the Reſt. And laſtly, we might take notice that *Alſheich* and *Xeque*, (the Latter perhaps from *Zaken*) that is, *Senior*, or *Presbyter*, are honourable Titles among the *Arabians*, given to Great and Learned Men, as Mr. *Selden* in his Book *De Synedriis* informs us. And to conclude, Government and Dominion began firſt in the *Eldeſt* Perſons of Families; theſe were the Primitive Princes, and *Elderſhip* was the firſt Government: Whence, perhaps, it is that *Elder* in all Languages ſignifies a *Superiour*, or one that is in Place and Dignity, and is become a Name of Reſpect.

Come we now in the next Place to look into the Signification of the Word πρεσβύτερος, in the New Teſtament. Sometimes it is taken in the Comparative Senſe, (as it really is the *Comparative* of the *Adjective* πρεσβὺς,) and ſignifies one that is *Older* than an other, as in *Luke* xv. 25. *His elder Son.* Sometimes it is taken abſolutely for one that is *Old*, and it is the ſame with πρεσβύτης, *ſenex*, Luke i. 8. And ſo in *Acts* ii. 17. πρεσβύτεροι are *Old Men.* Thus we are to underſtand 1 *Tim.* v. 1. *Rebuke not an Elder*, i. e. an antient Man; the Meaning is, a Perſon in Years is not to be chid with great Severity: For *Elder* is explained in that Verſe by *Father*, and is oppoſed to *Younger*, or *Young Men:* And in the next Verſe, πρεσβύτεραι are *Antient Women.* And ſomewhat different from this is the Senſe of

of πρεσβύτεροι in *Heb.* xi. 2. *Anceſtors*, thoſe of former Times, the ſame with the ἀρχαῖοι *Matt.* v. 21, 27. rendered there *thoſe of old Time.* Again, πρεσβύτεροι is the Word in the New Teſtament applied to Judges, and Rulers, and Governours of the People: Whence we ſo often read of the πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ, *Matt.* xxi. 23. xxvi. 3, 47. xxvii. 1. *Luke* xxii. 66. And the Word πρεσβύτεροι, found alone in *Matt.* xvi. 21. and in other Places, eſpecially in the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Sufferings, ſignifies the Rulers and Chief Men in the *Jewiſh* State.

Likewiſe, the Word is applied to the Eccleſiaſtical Governours among the *Jews*, as in *Matt.* xv. 2. where we read of *the Tradition of the Elders*, i. e. the Canons and Injunctions of the Chief Rulers of the Church. And I am perſwaded it will not be denied, that this is the Signification of the Word when it is joined with *the Scribes*, Matt. xxvi. 57. xxvii. 41. *Mark* xi. 27. xiv. 43, 53. *Acts* iv. 5. vi. 12. and with *the Chief Prieſts*, Matt. xxvi. 59. xxvii. 3. *Mark* viii. 31. *Acts* iv. 23.

There is yet a more reſtrained Senſe of the Word πρεσβύτεροι, as it is applied to the *Miniſters of the Chriſtian Church*, of which I have largely ſpoken in the Diſcourſe concerning the *Church*, and its *Officers*, in my *Theologia Reformata*; and therefore ſhall add nothing in this Place.

CHAP. II.

THUS we have a brief Account of the Words *Biſhop* and *Presbyter*, and from the whole it appears, that they have been always, and among all People, uſed as Titles of Honour and Worth; and therefore they are moſt fitly applied to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and the Rulers of Chriſt's Church. And it is to be noted, that of theſe two Names,

Names the Latter is the moſt honourable: For ἐπίσκοπος, *Biſhop*, imports Duty, that is, Inſpection and Over-ſeeing; but πρεσβύτερος, *Presbyter*, denotes not only that, but Gravity and Prudence, together with Power and Authority. Therefore it is obſervable, that the Apoſtles, to make thoſe they writ to ſenſible of the Dignity they were inveſted with, ſtile themſelves *Presbyters*, but never *Biſhops*. 1 *Pet.* v. 1. Second Epiſtle of *John* ver. 1. Third Epiſtle ver. 1. Yea, a Great * and Learned Man tells us, that the Title of *Biſhop is uſed in the New Teſtament by way of Diminution, and Qualification of the Power implied in the Name of Presbyter.* But we will not diſpute about this, and ſet them on rivalling one an other, ſeeing both the Titles unite in the ſame Perſon, and are Names but of one and the ſame Officer in the Church of Chriſt: Which is the Thing I am now to make good, and thence to prove that *Epiſcopacy* and *Presbytery* are not two diſtinct Orders in the Church.

That the Names *Biſhops*, and *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, are attributed to the ſame Eccleſiaſtical Perſons, will ſufficiently appear from theſe following Texts, which I will ſet down in the ſame Order that they occur in Scripture. The firſt remarkable Place is *Acts* xx. 17. which I had Occaſion juſt to mention before; *From Miletus he* (i. e. St. *Paul*) *ſent to Epheſus, and called the Elders of the Church:* And in the Verſes immediately following, he ſets himſelf before them as a Pattern of the Paſtoral Care, Zeal, Integrity, Induſtry, and Faithfulneſs, and then commits the Flock of God to them in theſe Words, *ver.* 28. *Take heed unto your ſelves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.* Where we plainly ſee, that thoſe Miniſters of the Goſpel,

* *Stillingfleet's* Irenic. Part 2. Chap. 6.

whom

whom he calls *Elders* or *Presbyters* of the Church of *Epheſus*, he afterwards calls *Biſhops*; for ſo it is according to the *Greek* Word, though our Tranſlators render it otherwiſe, namely, *Overſeers*. And perhaps they might do it deſignedly, that it might not be perceived that *Presbyters* or *Elders* are the ſame with *Biſhops*. But ſo it is, and it is impoſſible to evade the Force of theſe Texts thus compared together, eſpecially if we obſerve that it is ſaid here in general, without Reſerve or Limitation, that the Apoſtle called together *the Elders* of the Church of *Epheſus*; that is, all the Elders, the whole Body of the Clergy; and he ſtiles all of them *Biſhops*. He lets us know, that one of them is as much a *Biſhop* or *Overſeer*, as an other. It is undeniable, that if there had been one Biſhop or Overſeer over the Reſt, he would not have called them all ἐπισκόπους, in the Plural. Wherefore we may ſolidly infer, that there was no ſingle Biſhop in that Church, none that had Pre-eminence and Authority above the Reſt of the Miniſters, and was of a diſtinct Order from them. St. *Paul* makes *no Difference* between them, in his Charge he gives them here, but bids every one of them take Heed to all the Flock. Whereas, if there had been *One* above the Others, the Apoſtle moſt certainly would not have ſpoken thus. And further, they are all of them to *feed* the Church of God, which is a *general* Word, and comprehends the whole Paſtoral Office, not only Praying and Preaching, but Ruling and Governing. And it is obſervable, that the Apoſtle expreſsly ſaith, *the Holy Ghoſt hath made* theſe Presbyters to be *Biſhops* or *Overſeers* of the Church; ἔθετο. he hath conſtituted and appointed them: This Equality of Eccleſiaſtical Officers is of divine Inſtitution. Here is our Pattern, and it is according to the Direction of the *Holy Ghoſt* himſelf.

That

That the Titles of *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* agree to the ſame Perſons, is clear from *Phil.* i. 1. where St. *Paul* writes to, and ſalutes *all Saints in Chriſt Jeſus, which are at Philippi, with the Biſhops and Deacons.* He mentions not the *Presbyters*, becauſe they are the ſame with *Biſhops*; and therefore having named the one, there was no need of mentioning the other. If there had been a middle Order between *Biſhops* and *Deacons*, we cannot reaſonably imagine that the Apoſtle would have omitted it, and mentioned an inferiour Order before it. Wherefore the true Reaſon why the Apoſtle names not *Presbyters* is, becauſe they are included in the Word *Biſhops*; for this and the other are Names of the ſame Miniſters in the Church. But there have been Ways of evading this, though hitherto to little Purpoſe. Not to trouble the Reader with the Conceit of a late fanciful Writer *, that *Deacons* in this Place are *Prieſts*, and not only here, but in the Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, and in the Epiſtle to *Titus*; the moſt applauded Evaſion of this Text, is that of *Petavius*, and of Dr. *Hammond*, who were of Opinion that the Church, in the Apoſtles Time, had only *Biſhops* and *Deacons*, and that *Elders* or *Presbyters* mentioned in any Part of the New Teſtament were *Biſhops*. The Latter of theſe Writers ſaith expreſsly †, "The Title of "πρεσβύτεροι in the Scripture-times belonged prin- "cipally, if not alone, to Biſhops, there being no "Evidence that any of that Second Order were "then inſtituted; though ſoon after, before the "writing of *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles, there were ſuch in- "ſtituted in all Churches". In which Words this learned Man frankly owns what I am aſſerting and proving, that *Presbyter* and *Biſhop* are two Names for the very ſame Perſon; and thus it was all along

* Dr. *Saywell*'s Original of all Plots, *&c.*
† Annotat. on *Acts* xi. 30.

in

in the *Scripture-times*. And in other Places in his *Annotations* he declares, that there were no Preſbyters different from Biſhops in the Days of the Apoſtles. But then he tells us, that though the Church had, at that Time, no Presbyters as diſtinct from the Office of a Biſhop, yet afterwards aroſe Presbyters, or Prieſts properly ſo called, and theſe were a diſtinct Order from Biſhops.

Who doth not ſee how weak and precarious a Notion this is, yea, how deſtructive it is to the Evangelical *Presbytery* (or, as ſome call it, *Prieſthood*) itſelf? This is as much as to ſay, There is no Proof in Scripture for the Office of *Presbyters*: This was a Thing altogether unknown to the Apoſtolical or truly Primitive Times. The *Presbyters*, who are now a Second Order in the Church, were not appointed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; and if they be not of divine Inſtitution, then they are an *Humane Invention*, and conſequently there is no Foundation but *that* for the executing of the Office of a Prieſt or Presbyter: And, as the Conſequence of that, thoſe who call themſelves Clergymen or Prieſts, are but Laymen; for they are really ſuch if their Prieſthood hath no Foundation in Scripture. Thus we are in a very bad Condition, we have no Church, becauſe moſt of the Church-Ordinances are adminiſtered by Presbyters, who are no True Officers, and can ſhew nothing in all the New Teſtament for their Authority. And thus the Defenders of *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy* aboliſh the very Order which they are of themſelves: Or, at leaſt, to ſet up one Office, they are forced to null an other. To make one of divine Right, they make the other have no Right at all. This one would think is very ſtrange Doctrine, and ſhould not come from Men of Learning and Worth. Beſides, I might remark, that this is not agreeable to the Notion which they form of the three Different Degrees of *Biſhops*, *Prieſts*, and *Deacons*; namely, that

that they were appointed in Conformity to the *High-Prieſt*, *Prieſts*, and *Levites* among the *Jews*. According to this Doctrine, the Chriſtian Church-Officers were not appointed in Conformity to theſe three Ranks of Eccleſiaſticks under the Law: And ſo they let go their Hypotheſis about the Riſe of Church-Government. I diſmiſs then this Opinion as very groundleſs, and ſuch indeed as hath been exploded by moſt of the Writers who, in other Points, are Dr. *Hammond*'s Friends and Admirers. Though I find a late Writer * reviving this Opinion, that there were no *Presbyters* in the firſt Age of the Church, for he tells us that there were only theſe three Orders of Miniſters, *viz.* Apoſtles, Biſhops, and Deacons. And now I return to what theſe very Men acknowledge, That in the Scripture there is no Mention of Biſhops as *diſtinct* from Presbyters, but only of Biſhops or Presbyters, and Deacons: For this is plain in the Stile of Scripture, that *Presbyters* were called *Biſhops*, and *Biſhops* were called *Presbyters*. The Names were indifferently and promiſcuouſly uſed, and ſo it was in this Firſt Verſe of the Firſt Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*: And therefore, inſtead of *Biſhops and Deacons*, we find in the *Syriac* Verſion, *Presbyters and Deacons*.

Again, in the Third Chapter of the Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, we plainly ſee, that the Apoſtle immediately paſſes from *Biſhops* to *Deacons*, becauſe a *Biſhop* here is but an other Word or Term for a *Presbyter*; as appears from this, St. *Paul* gives Rules about the Qualifications of a *Biſhop*, ver. 1. *A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs*, and ſo goes on 'till we come to the 8*th* Verſe, where he proceeds to the Character of a *Deacon*, *Likewiſe muſt the Deacons be grave* &c. But where are the Qualifications and Cha-

* Dr. *Potter*'s Vindication of the Rights and Privileges of the Chriſtian Church.

racter of a *Presbyter?* Can we think that the Apoſtle would omit this Order, ſuppoſing it were diſtinct from that of a *Biſhop*, and that he would ſubſtitute the Office of *Deacon* in its Place? No ſurely; but becauſe *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* are the ſame, therefore it was that he mentioned only *Biſhops*, intending in that Name to include and comprehend *Presbyters*. This is agreeable to the New Teſtament Language, where the Word *Biſhop* ſignifies a *Presbyter*, and *vice verſâ*.

This may be further proved from 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*; that is, the College of the Elders or Presbyters, St. *Paul* himſelf being alſo among them, and actually aſſiſting in laying Hands on *Timothy*, 2 Tim. i. 6. And who were theſe *Elders?* Dr. *Hammond*, and all the Aſſerters of Epiſcopacy, as it is now eſtabliſhed, with one Voice cry out, that *Biſhops* are meant by *Elders* in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, and in the *Epiſtles*, and conſequently the Laying on of the Hands of the *Eldership*, is the ſame with the Laying on of the Hands of the *Epiſcopacy*. Let them underſtand it how they pleaſe, it is enough for my preſent Purpoſe, that *Biſhops* and *Elders* are the ſame in the Apoſtles Writings, and confeſſed by theſe Perſons to be ſo.

I might mention 1 *Tim.* v. 17, where the *Elders that labour in the Word and Doctrine* are the ſame Office with the *Biſhop*, Chap. iii. ver. 2. who muſt be *apt to teach*.

Next, I alledge that celebrated Place, *Tit.* i. 5, 6. compared with *ver.* 7. In the former Verſes St. *Paul* tells *Titus* that *he left him in Crete, that he ſhould ordain Elders in every City*, there. *If any Man be blameleſs*, &c. that is, if upon Examination he finds ſuch Perſons as are there characterized, thoſe are the Men that he muſt *ordain*, and *make Elders*. And theſe Elders he calls *Biſhops* in the following

following Verſe: *For*, ſaith he, *a Biſhop muſt be blameleſs*, and then proceeds farther to ſhew what this *Elder*, this *Biſhop*, this Paſtor or Teacher (for theſe different Words ſignify the ſame Thing) ought to be, and how he muſt behave himſelf in the Church of God. Thus 'tis evident that *Elder* and *Biſhop* are applied to the ſame Order of Men.

I will mention only one Place more, 1 *Pet.* v. 1. *The Elders who are among you I exhort*; and the Exhortation follows, *Feed the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the Overſight thereof*, &c. Whence we gather that the Word *Elders* is but an other Name for *Biſhops*; for he tells them that their Office is ποιμάινειν and ἐπισκοπεῖν, *to feed* and *take the Overſight* of the Flock, which is the Deſcription of an Evangelick Biſhop, and the latter Expreſſion is a plain Reference to the Word ἐπίσκοπος. Thus we ſee that *Elder* and *Biſhop* are ſynonimous in the Sacred Writings, and from thence I infer that they are the ſame Office in the Church; for the *promiſcuous Uſe of the Names* is inconſiſtent with the *Diſtinction of the Offices*.

I might here add, that this was the Stile not only of the *Scripture*, but of the *Primitive Fathers* and *Writers* of the Church. *Clement* the Fellow-Labourer of St. *Paul*, and the Diſciple of the Apoſtles, in his firſt Epiſtle written to the *Corinthians* hath theſe Words, * "The Apoſtles preach-" ing the Word in Cities and Regions, and trying " the Firſt Fruits of them by the Spirit, appointed " *Biſhops* and *Deacons* out of thoſe who ſhould " believe". But he makes no mention here of *Presbyters*, becauſe they were the ſame with *Biſhops*. And this Writer in the ſame Epiſtle calls thoſe *Biſhops* in one place whom he calls *Elders* or *Pres-*

* Κατὰ πόλεις καὶ χώρας κηρύσσοντες καθίσανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι εἰς ἐπισκόπους, καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιςεύειν.

byters in an other, as any one may ſatisfy himſelf by conſulting the Epiſtle. So *Polycarp* in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians* uſes the Word πρεσβύτερος as equivalent with ἐπίσκοπος, as I ſhall particularly ſhew afterwards. So doth *Irenæus* in his Epiſtle to *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome*; he calls thoſe other Biſhops of *Rome*, namely, *Anicetus*, *Pius*, *Hyginus*, *Teleſphorus*, *Sixtus*, Presbyters; as you may ſee in *Euſebius*'s Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, book 5. chap. 24. So in † an other Place this Antient Father uſes the Words *Presbyters* and *Biſhops* promiſcuouſly; for what he had before called *the Succeſſion of Biſhops*, he afterwards calls *the Succeſſion of Presbyters*. And § again, he makes the Succeſſion of Epiſcopacy and Presbytery the very ſame, for theſe are his Words; "We ought to obey the Presbyters of the "Church, who ſucceed the Apoſtles, as we have "ſhewed, and who together with the Succeſſion "of Epiſcopacy (that is of *Presbytery*, for it refers "to the Presbyters before mentioned), have re-"ceived the ſure Gift of Truth according to the "Good Pleaſure of God the Father". Whence it is evident, that not only in the Apoſtles Times, (as we learn from the New Teſtament), but afterwards, the Names of *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* were of the ſame Import, and denoted the ſame Order of Men in the Church. I might obſerve here that *Chryſoſtom*'s Book *of Prieſthood* is of the Office of a *Biſhop*; which ſhews that at that Time the Biſhops were called *Prieſts* or *Presbyters*, for theſe two Words were promiſcuouſly uſed.

Further, I might note that γέρων, which is the ſame with πρεσβύτερος, was ſynonimous with ἐπίσκοπος, as Γέρων Ἰννοκέντιος and Ἐπίσκοπος Ἰννοκέντιος. *Codex Canon. Eccleſ. African. c.* 90. Γέρων was the Title given to the *Primate* or Chief Biſhop in *Africa*. c. 97, 100. and *Can.* 127. So *Sylvanus* was

† Adv. Hæreſ. l. 3. c. 2. § l. 4. c. 43.

ſome-

ſometimes called *Senex Eccleſiæ Summenſis*, and ſometimes *Epiſcopus Eccleſiæ Summenſis*. Collat. Carthag. 1. c. 16, &c. 57. I could obſerve yet further, that *Epiſcopus* and *Presbyter* (the Titles I am diſcourſing of) are of the ſame nature with *Papa* and *Abbas*, which were of old applied to all Reverend and Religious Men, but eſpecially *Papa* was the Name given to Clergymen of Worth and Eminence, particularly *Biſhops*, as we may ſee in St. *Auguſtine*'s Epiſtles, and St. *Jerom*'s Epiſtles to him: But afterwards this Word was appropriated to the *Pope*. In like manner it fared with the Terms I am ſpeaking of, they were at firſt equally common to *all Paſtors* of the Chriſtian Church, but by degrees the Uſe of them was changed, and the one was made the Title of an Higher Order than the other. But from the Beginning it was not ſo.

This promiſcuous Uſe of Words, and the Indiſtinction of the Offices are further clear from what we ſo often read in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and particularly in * *Euſebius*, that *Biſhops* only preached to the People. It is not probable, that in a City or Great Town there was no Preacher but a Biſhop, in the modern Senſe of the Word; for there were uſually ſeveral Presbyters in ſuch Places, and they were able to diſcharge that Office. Wherefore when we read that *Biſhops* did all in the Primitive Churches, that they *alone* performed all the Parts of Divine Service (as Mr. *Thorndyke* and others have proved out of *Cyprian*, *Juſtin Martyr*, &c.) we can't think it is to be meant of *Dioceſan Biſhops*. If there had been ſuch in thoſe firſt Times, they could not have Catechized, Baptized, Prayed, Preached, delivered the Euchariſt, &c. in ſo large a Compaſs as a Dioceſe. We are then to underſtand the Matter aright, and to know that when 'tis ſaid, the *Biſhops only* performed that

* Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 6. cap. 19.

great Work, the meaning is, that the *Presbyters* did it, or rather thoſe that were called both *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*. Theſe, in contradiſtinction to *Deacons*, preached and performed the other Offices. But 'tis impoſſible that *Biſhops*, in the late Acception of the Word, could have done ſo much Work.

Laſtly, I may ſuperadd to all that I have ſaid, that *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* were the ſame according to the Senſe and Opinion of the *Gentiles*, who had any Converſe with the Chriſtians; as appears from a Paſſage in *Adrian*'s Epiſtle, which *Vopiſcus* hath recited, where he ſaith, that Perſons of all Religions worſhipped *Serapis*: There was no Man of any Art or Profeſſion but did this, and amongſt the reſt he inſerts this, *Nemo Chriſtianorum Presbyter*, None of the Biſhops of the Chriſtian Churches.

CHAP. III.

BUT my main Hold is upon *Scripture*, and I think I have ſufficiently evinced from thence the Thing that I undertook to prove. But leſt ſome ſhould be diſſatisfied with what I have ſaid, and diſallow of my Interpretation of thoſe Places of Scripture which I alledged, and ſhould think me Preſumptuous in making ſuch an Inference from them as I have done; I will in the next place endeavour to ſatisfy the Reader, by ſhewing that the *Antient Fathers* and *Writers* of the Church interpreted the foreſaid Texts after the ſame manner that I did, and drew the very ſame Inferences from them, that is, that *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* are the ſame. Thus thoſe Words (which I firſt produced) out of *Acts* xx. 17, and 28. are alledged by St. *Jerom* in his Commentary on *Tit.* i. 5. to the very ſame End and Purpoſe that I mentioned them. He having ſaid before that the Names of Biſhop and Presbyter are

are applied to the ſame Perſon, proceeds thus: * *This may perhaps be doubted of by ſome, unleſs I back it with an other Teſtimony, and that is in the Acts of the Apoſtles, where 'tis written that when St.* Paul *came to* Miletus, *he ſent to* Epheſus, *and called for the Elders of that Church, and ſpoke thus to them:* "*Take heed unto your ſelves, and to all the* "*Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you* "*Biſhops*". *Mark this diligently, that thoſe very Perſons who by the Apoſtles are called in the former place the* Elders *or* Presbyters *of that one City of* Epheſus, *are in the latter ſtiled by him* Biſhops. And the ſame Learned Father again in an other of his Writings, namely, his known *Epiſtle* to *Evagrius*, expreſsly quotes the very ſame Texts in the *Acts* to prove that the Office of Biſhops and Presbyters is the ſame.

The next Place that I quoted was *Phil.* i. 1. where only *Biſhops* and *Deacons* are named in the Apoſtle's Salutation there, and it is interpreted by the ſame Antient Writer in that very manner in which I underſtood it; as may be ſeen not only in his forementioned Commentary on *Tit.* i. 5. where he thus ſpeaks: † *Some it may be may think that it is not the Senſe of the Scriptures, but my own private Opinion only, that a Presbyter and a Biſhop are the ſame; and that one Name is given becauſe of the Age of the Perſon, the other with reſpect to his Office; but let the Apoſtle's Words to the* Philippians *be read,*

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* Adhuc hoc alicui videatur ambiguum niſi altero teſtimonio comprobatur; in Actibus Apoſtolorum ſcriptum eſt quòd cùm veniſſet Apoſtolus Miletum, miſerit Epheſum & vocaverit Presbyteros Eccleſiæ ejuſdem, quibus poſtea inter cætera ſic locutus eſt; *Attendite vobis & omni gregi in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus poſuit Epiſcopos* &c. Et hoc diligentiùs obſervate quomodo unius civitatis Epheſi *Presbyteros* vocans, poſtea eoſdem *Epiſcopos* dixerit.

† Putet aliquis non Scripturarum, ſed noſtram eſſe ſententiam, Epiſcopum & Presbyterum unum eſſe, & aliud ætatis, aliud eſſe nomen officij; relegat Apoſtoli ad Philippenſes verba dicentis, *Omnibus Sanctis qui ſunt Philippis, cum Epiſcopis & Diaconis.*

"*To all the Saints that are at* Philippi, *with the* "*Biſhops and Deacons*", *and then it will appear that this is the Senſe of Scripture, as well as mine.* But likewiſe in his Commentary on *Phil.* i. 1. where his Words are, *Here by Biſhops we are to underſtand Presbyters.* And in the foreſaid Epiſtle there is this remarkable Paſſage, * *Becauſe*, ſaith he, *at that Time they called the ſame Perſons Biſhops and Presbyters, therefore the Apoſtle here ſpeaks indifferently concerning the Biſhops of* Philippi, *as concerning Presbyters.* This Place is expounded after the ſame manner by St. *Chryſoſtom* in his 1ſt Homily on the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, where, giving the Reaſon why the Apoſtles writ to the Biſhops and Deacons only, he lets us know that *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* were then Names of the ſame Function. What plainer Words can there be than theſe: † *He calls the Presbyters by the Name of Biſhops, becauſe at that time they interchanged Names.* And a little after, § *Presbyters of old were called Bishops, and Bishops Presbyters.* *Theodoret* upon the ſame Text hath the like Comment, and tells us, that it is evident from this Place, that Biſhops and Preſbyters were the ſame at firſt. ‡ *The Apoſtle*, ſaith he, *calls the Presbyters of Philippi Bishops, becauſe both Names were at that Time common to the ſame Office.* So *OEcumenius* on the Place owns that Biſhops and Presbyters were the ſame in the Apoſtles Times. And *Theophylact* makes this Remark on the Words; *Not that there were* (ſaith he) *many Bishops in that one City of Philippi, but he calls them*

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* Quia eoſdem Epiſcopos & Presbyteros tunc appellabant, indifferenter de Epiſcopis quaſi de Presbyteris Philippenſibus locutus eſt Paulus.

† Τὰς πρεσβυτέρας ἔτως ἐκάλεσε, τότε γὰρ τέως ἐκοινώνουν τοῖς ὀνόμασι.

§ Οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τὸ παλαιὸν ἐκαλοῦντο ἐπίσκοποι, καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι πρεσβύτεροι.

‡ Ἐπισκόπους δὲ τὸς πρεσβυτέρας καλεῖ, ἀμφότερα γὰρ εἶχον κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν τὰ ὀνόματα.

Biſhops

Biſhops that were Presbyters. Thus we ſee how this Text is underſtood not only by St. *Jerom*, the Chief of the *Latin* Fathers, but by the moſt eminent Fathers of the *Greek* Church. And what Biſhop *Pearſon* ſuggeſts againſt this Interpretation of *Phil.* i. 1. is very mean, and below himſelf, and any one may ſee it is meer *Evaſion*, as * one of our Church truly defines it to be. The Biſhop ſaith it cannot be proved that there were at *Philippi* any Presbyters of the Second Order; but this is confuted by all thoſe Fathers of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church, who expreſsly ſay on this Text, that the *Presbyters* of *Philippi* are here called *Bishops*. He holds that there might be more Biſhops than one at *Philippi*, and ſo thinks he ſolves the Text; but this is againſt the Teſtimony of all Antiquity that there were more than one Biſhop in one Place, as we ſhall hear afterwards.

An other Place which I produced was the 3d Chapter of the 1ſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, where the Apoſtle makes mention of *Bishops* and *Deacons*, but ſaith nothing of Presbyters. The Reaſon of which St. *Chryſoſtom*, in his 11th *Homily* on this Epiſtle, imputes to the Parity of Biſhops and Presbyters. He tells us, that the ſame Advice which the Apoſtles gives to the *Bishops* belongs to the *Presbyters:* So that there was no need of particularly naming the latter, for what is ſaid to one appertains to the other. His Words are theſe, which are very Remarkable; † *Why doth the Apoſtle paſs by Presbyters, and give Advice to the Deacons next to Bishops? Becauſe there is but a ſmall Difference between them and Bishops, for the*

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* Dr. *Whitby* on the Place.

† Τί δήποτε; ὅτι ἐ πολὺ τὸ μέσον αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων· καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν ἀναδεδεγμένοι καὶ προεδρίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας· καὶ ἃ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἶπε, ταῦτα καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ἁρμόττει.

Pres-

Presbyters have received the Charge of Teaching, and of Ruling the Church. And ſo what ever the Apoſtle ſaid of Bishops agrees alſo to Presbyters. And though it is true he adds, that * *Bishops are above Presbyters as to laying on of Hands, and in this one thing only they ſeem to excell Presbyters*; yet we muſt remember what this Good Father had ſaid before on *Phil.* i. 1. that Biſhop and Presbyter are Names of the ſame Office and Function: And even here he expreſſes what he ſaith, after this faint manner, δοκεῖσι *they ſeem to* &c. It is rather a Shew than a Reality. St. *Jerom* gives the ſame Reaſon that St. *Chryſoſtom* doth, why St. *Paul* mentions *Bishops* and *Deacons* only in his Epiſtle to *Timothy* (and alſo to *Titus*), namely, *becauſe* † *a Presbyter is contained in a Bishop, and therefore there was no occaſion to mention both.* St. *Ambroſe* agrees with this Great Man in rendering the Reaſon why the Apoſtle, after the Deſcription of a *Bishop*, proceeds to that of a *Deacon*, and ſaith nothing of a *Presbyter: He doth it*, § ſaith he, *becauſe a Bishop and a Presbyter have but one Ordination, for they are both of them Prieſts*, and therefore they are the ſame Order. *Theodoret* ſaith the ſame on this Place that he had ſaid before on *Phil.* i. 1. and declares plainly that ‡ *the Apoſtle here calls a Presbyter a Bishop.* Thus we hear what four Learned and Pious Biſhops and Governours of the Church ſay on this Place of Scripture.

So alſo that other Text alledged by me, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. is underſtood by the Fathers in the ſame

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* Τῇ χειροτονίᾳ μόνῃ ὑπερβεβήκασι, καὶ τούτῳ μόνῳ δοκεῖσι πλεονεκτεῖν τὸς πρεσβυτέρους.

† Unde & ad Titum & ad Timotheum de ordinatione Epiſcopi & Diaconi dicitur, de Presbyteris omnino reticetur? Quia in Epiſcopo & Presbyter continetur. *Epiſt. ad Evagrium.*

§ Poſt Epiſcopum diaconi ordinationem ſubjicit. Quare niſi quia Epiſcopi & Presbyteri una ordinatio eſt? uterque enim ſacerdos eſt. *In* 1 *Epiſt. ad Timoth. cap.* 3.

‡ Ἐπίσκοπον δὲ ἐνταῦθα τὸν πρεσβύτερον λέγει. In 1 Tim. 3.

Way

Way that I took it. From *the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, St. *Chryſoſtom* gathers that Biſhops of old had the Name of Presbyters, for, ſaith he, *none could ordain but Bishops.* St. *Jerom* in the forecited Epiſtle to *Evagrius* quotes this very Text to prove that the Title of *Presbyter* is promiſcuouſly communicated to the ſame Perſons.

Then for that other Text, *Tit.* i. 5. *I left thee in Crete, to ordain Elders*, compared with Verſe 7. St. *Jerom* in the forementioned Epiſtle cites this Place to prove that *Presbyters* were called *Bishops*; and *Chryſoſtom*, *Theodoret*, and *Oecumenius* do the ſame. Particularly *Theodoret* tells us in his Commentary on 1 *Tim.* iii. 1. that bare Presbyters are here meant, becauſe they are in the *Plural*, for there was *but One ſingle Biſhop in a City.* And Archbiſhop *Pearſon* himſelf lets us know that it it was the Judgement of *Tertullian*, *Clement of Alexandria*, and *Origen* that the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of Presbyters properly ſo called. A * late Writer that undertakes the Defence of Epiſcopacy takes up this Interpretation, though moſt of our Epiſcopal Divines explode it.

There is a Text which I did not mention before, but is taken notice of by St. *Jerom*, and is brought to prove what I have been aſſerting: It is that in *Heb.* xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your Souls* &c. On which Words that Learned Father thus, † *There the Care of the Church is equally divided among many, ſeeing he writes theſe Words to the People, Obey them* &c. And whereas ſome have thought that thoſe Terms *Obey*, and *Submit Your ſelves*, argue that the Perſons to whom this Obedience and Submiſſion are to

* Dr. *Turner.*

† Ibi æqualiter inter plures Eccleſiæ cura dividitur, ſiquidem ad plebem ſcribit, Parete principibus veſtris, & ſubjecti eſtote *&c. Hieronym. Comment. in* 1 *Tit.* 5.

be

be paid, were more than Presbyters or Ordinary Paſtors, and were of an higher Order, this is a groundleſs Thought and Imagination, for then 1 *Cor.* xiv. 32. muſt be underſtood ſo, which none yet ever dreamt of; and when the Apoſtle bids the *Corinthians*, *Submit themſelves to the Houſe of Stephanas, and to every one that helpeth and laboureth*, we muſt infer thence that all theſe were *Bishops* of *Corinth*, or of ſome other Places.

So likewiſe as to that Place, 1 *Pet.* v. 1. *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am alſo an Elder*; *Chryſoſtom*, *OEcumenius*, and *Theophylact*, own that *Elders* here are the ſame with *Bishops* or Paſtors of the Church. St. *Jerom* quotes this Text to the ſame purpoſe, **That he might ſhew* (as he ſaith) *that among the Antients Presbyters and Bishops were the ſame.* And he quotes it again to the ſame End in his *Epiſtle* to *Evagrius*. Where he goes on, and makes uſe of the 1ſt Verſe of the 2d Epiſtle of St. *John*, *The Elder unto the Elect Lady*; and the 1ſt Verſe of the 3d Epiſtle, *The Elder to the well-beloved Gaius*; inferring from thence that *Presbyter* and *Bishop* are Synonimous Terms, and from this that the Office is the ſame. Thus we ſee that this Argument is made uſe of by the beſt Writers of the Church, and is approved of by all Antiquity.

And the *Syriac Verſion* will help us in this Cauſe which is now before us; for according to that 'tis in *Phil.* i. 1. *the Elders and Deacons*, which we render *the Biſhops and Deacons*. And in 1 *Tim.* iii. 1. 'tis *the Office of an Elder*, which we render *the Office of a Bishop*. And *Tit.* i. 5, 7. is rendered thus; *I left thee in Crete that thou ſhouldeſt ordain Elders in every City*; — *for an Elder* (which we tranſlate *Bishop*) *muſt be blameleſs*. Which plainly ſhews that they who made the *Syriac* Tranſlation,

* Petrus in Epiſtolâ ſuâ loquitur dicens, *Presbyteros in vobis obſecro compresbyter*, &c. Hæc propterea, ut oſtenderemus apud Veteres eoſdem fuiſſe Presbyteros quos & Epiſcopos. *Comment. in* 1 *Tit.* v.

knew

knew no Difference between a *Biſhop* and an *Elder* or *Presbyter*.

But againſt this it is *Objected* that, the Argument to prove the Community of Names is not cogent, becauſe though a Biſhop be called a Presbyter in the New Teſtament, yet a Presbyter is never called a Biſhop. The Learned Biſhop *Pearſon*, in his *Vindication of Ignatius's Epiſtles*, and ſome other Conſiderable Writers look upon this as a very formidable Objection, and hope to carry the Cauſe by it. But if we examine it, we ſhall find it is both Falſe and Frivolous. *Falſe*, becauſe Presbyters are expreſsly ſtiled Biſhops, as well as Biſhops have the Name of Presbyters. Thus in that *Acts* xx. 17. thoſe who were called *Presbyters* or *Elders* of the Church of *Epheſus* are in Verſe 28. called *Biſhops*. So in *Phil.* i. 1. the Name of *Biſhops* is given to thoſe who were really *Presbyters*, as is evident from their being joined with *Deacons*, as hath been ſhewed before. So in 1 *Tim.* iii. 1, 2. he hath the Title of *Biſhop* given him, who is of the Order of *Presbyters*; for the Apoſtle proceeds next to the Character of a *Deacon*. So again, thoſe that are diſtinguiſhed by the Title of *Elders* or *Presbyters* of *Crete*, 1 *Tit.* v. have the Denomination of *Biſhops* Verſe 7. And thus the *Elders* or Presbyters whom St. *Peter* exhorts, 1 Epiſt. v. 1. are the ἐπισκοποῦντες. Verſe 2. thoſe that diſcharged the Office of *Biſhops*, as we find it there deſcribed by the Apoſtle. I have produced theſe Texts once again, and ſet them before the Reader, that he may be convinced of the Falſehood of the foreſaid Objection, and that he may be thoroughly perſuaded that neither the very Learned Man before mentioned nor any others have any Ground to aſſert that a Presbyter is never called a Biſhop in Scripture, though they confeſs a Biſhop is called a Presbyter. And beſides, the Objection is as *Frivolous* as 'tis Falſe; for if a Biſhop and a Presbyter be the ſame, which is the Thing

that

that is founded on the Terms or Names given to them, then when a Biſhop is called a Presbyter, it follows that a Presbyter hath the Title of a Biſhop at the ſame time. It muſt needs be that they are Reciprocal Names, and conſequently it appears that what is objected is a needleſs and vain Cavil, and is purely Sophiſtical.

Some have ſuggeſted that the promiſcuous Uſe of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter* will ſignify little, unleſs it can be proved that when thoſe Terms were applied to the ſame Perſons, Chriſtian Churches were under the ſole Power and Government of Presbyters. But there is no Neceſſity of proving this, for the greateſt Patrons of Epiſcopacy freely grant that the *Primitive Bishop* never acted any thing by himſelf alone, but always with the Conſent and Aſſiſtance of his Clergy, and conſequently he had not *the ſole Power and Government*: Why therefore is this required in *Presbyters?* It is evident therefore that notwithſtanding this Objection the promiſcuous Uſe of the Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in the New Teſtament is an Argument that may fitly be made uſe of to prove the Indentity of Biſhops and Presbyters.

Again, 'tis *Objected* that ſome or all of thoſe Fathers who own that Biſhops are called Presbyters, and Presbyters Biſhops, do hold that *Epiſcopacy* is a different Order or Degree from *Presbytery* or *Prieſthood*: therefore their acknowledging of the former doth not imply that Epiſcopacy and Preſbytery are the ſame. I anſwer, their former Confeſſion tells us what the Sacred Scriptures held forth, that is, the Indentity of Biſhops and Presbyters: but their latter Declaration, which is only of ſome of them, tells us this only, namely, what was the Practice that prevailed in the Church at that time when they wrote, that is, that Biſhops (in ſome Places eſpecially) were then mounted above Preſbyters.

There

There are ſome other little Objections made againſt the Promiſcuous Uſe of the Words, but they only inform us that the Perſons who make uſe of them have a mind to ſay ſomething; though little to the purpoſe, though they apparently treſpaſs againſt Grammar and Criticiſm, and though what they ſuggeſt is againſt the Determination of the *Fathers*, whom they at other Times much adhere to.

Having removed the main *Objections*, the Argument fetched from the promiſcuous Uſe of the Names remains good and valid; that is, the Names of Biſhop and Presbyter are common and promiſcuous in the New Teſtament, therefore their Power and Office is ſo too: For there can no Reaſon be given why their Names ſhould be common, and yet the Thing ſignified by their Names ſhould not be the ſame, but diſtinct. Beſides, if the Names be common, but the Perſons and the Power diſtinct, then the Apoſtle was not Faithful in his delivering of Rules and Injunctions about the Officers of the Church; becauſe if he confounds their Names and Titles, he doth at the ſame time confound their Truſts and Offices; but it is not to be thought that the Apoſtle would be guilty of ſuch a groſs Errour. Again, if Biſhops and Presbyters be two diſtinct Dignities and Offices in the Church, and ſettled in diſtinct Perſons, and yet have Names in common, then not only the Clergy muſt needs miſtake their proper Duty, but the People likewiſe muſt not know how to diſcharge their Duty a-right, and both theſe muſt be imputed to the Negligence (or what ever elſe you will call it) of the Apoſtle. Wherefore to clear him of this ſcandalous Imputation, we muſt hold that *Epiſcopacy* and *Presbytery* are the ſame Office, and ſeated in the ſame Perſons, and that there is no real Diſtinction between them. Only the Name *Presbyter* denotes the *Gravity* and *Worth* of the Perſon who is ſo called, becauſe he was gene-

generally heretofore a Man of Years and Diſcretion; and the Title of *Biſhop* lets us know (and lets him know) what is his *Office* and *Employment*.

CHAP. IV.

BUT it is not a Controverſy about the *Names* only, when it is asked whether *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* were the ſame in the Apoſtles Days. That which is chiefly intended in the Queſtion is, whether the *Orders* of Biſhops and Presbyters were diſtinct. Was there not a real *Office* belonging to one that the other had nothing to do with? Is there not ſuch a Rank of Men in the Church as is Superiour to Presbyters in their Commiſſion and Function? That there was no ſuch Thing, I ſhall now evince in the next Place, and that from the Holy Scripture.

The Second Argument then againſt Epiſcopacy, as the Word is taken at this Day, is from Our Saviour's *Miſſion* given to the Apoſtles, and all their Succeſſors in the Sacred Miniſtry. This we find in *John* xvii. 18. *As thou haſt ſent me into the World, even ſo have I alſo ſent them into the World.* And this Miſſion or Embaſſy was renewed and confirmed by Chriſt after his Reſurrection, *John* xx. 21. *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* Where Our Saviour ſpeaks to them all promiſcuouſly; he ſends them all alike, and on the ſame Task. If our Lord had deſigned a Power in one above an other, he would have here mentioned it; he would have ſaid in plain Terms, "I ſend ſome "of them to be of a different Order from the reſt, "I ſend ſome of them to rule and govern, and "others of them to be ſubject, and to be the In- "feriour Clergy in the Church": But he ſaith nothing of it, and thence I gather that there is no Su-

Superiority of Power in any of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, but that there is an Equality. One hath no more Juriſdiction and Authority than an other hath. And ſo in our Saviour's *Commiſſion* in *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20. which was alſo after his Reſurrection, the Office of all the Evangelical Miniſters is plainly the ſame. *Go teach and baptize, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.* Here the Authority to *teach* and *baptize* (which comprehends all the *other* Miniſterial Offices) is beſtowed upon All, without Diſtinction, without Limitation. Whereas, if our Saviour had intended that one ſhould be above the Reſt in Office and Power, he, queſtionleſs, would here, when he ſolemnly gives them their Commiſſion, have intimated ſome ſuch Thing. But we ſee that there is as much Power conveyed to one as to an other in theſe Words: They are alike inveſted with Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction. And this is to be a Standing Law *to the End of the World.* Neither here, nor in the fore-cited Places, is there the leaſt Notice given of a *Superiority* of one above an other in the Government of the Church. Wherefore we may rationally infer, that there is no ſuch Eccleſiaſtical Power reſiding in any ſingle Perſon, there is no ſuperiour Order of Men appointed to rule over the Clergy.

But ſome, perhaps, will ſay, This is only a *Negative Argument*, and is of little Force. To which this may be returned, that we are wont to argue thus againſt the *Papiſts*, when they ſtand up either for the Pope's Infallibility or Supremacy: If there were any ſuch Thing, certainly it would be mentioned by ſome of the Apoſtles in their Writings, when they have ſo frequent Occaſion to ſpeak of Church-Matters. So here it is as good arguing, If there were ſuch an Order in the Chriſtian Church, as *Epiſcopacy* or *Prelacy*, (as it is underſtood to be above Presbyters), then, without doubt, it would have been mentioned in the Miſſion or

Commiſſion to the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors; for this is certain, if they derive not their Power from a Commiſſion, it is invalid. Wherefore we may conclude, that Prelacy, or Superiority of Office in the Church above Presbyters, is invalid and groundleſs.

And here under this Head, I will add, that the Equality of Miniſters under the Goſpel may be learnt, not only from the Equality contained in their *Commiſſion*, but from the Equality of *Gifts* conferred on the Miniſters by the Holy Spirit. We may obſerve, that they were *alike* furniſhed with theſe, which ſhews the Equality of their Office. For, if there had been a Superiour Order, and more was required of them than of the Reſt of the Clergy, we ſhould have found that they were *enabled* accordingly; that ſome Endowments, Vertues, and Excellencies, were beſtowed on the one, more than on the other. But there is no ſuch Thing, as you may inform your ſelves from St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, and other Places, where the Character of the Clergy is given: Which ſhews that they are all of equal Rank and Power in the Church, and that their Work and Office is the ſame.

But it will be ſaid (and it is very warmly urged by ſome, as if it were Argumentative) that the *Jewiſh* Church had *High-Prieſts*, *Prieſts*, and *Levites*, three Orders of the Clergy; for as Prieſts were above Levites, ſo the High-Prieſt was above both, who was famous for his Prerogative of entring into the Holy of Holies. Why then is there not an *Inequality* of Church-Officers under the Goſpel? Why are not *Biſhops* above *Prieſts*, ſeeing an Inequality of Miniſters under the Law was by divine Appointment? I anſwer, and ſo were many other Things, as Sacrifices, and other Rites of Worſhip, which yet we do not think are to be obſerved now, though they were appointed by God. So neither doth

doth it follow, that becauſe *High-Prieſts* were ſuperiour to the other Ranks of Eccleſiaſticks, therefore there ought to be *Biſhops* now ſuperiour to *Presbyters*. Beſides, there was but *one High-Prieſt* among the *Jews*, how then doth that make for *Multitudes of Bishops?* If we muſt be conformable to the *Jewish* Law in the *Pontificate*, why do we not ſet up one ſingle Biſhop, and no more? For this is according to the Pattern which is pretended. But the moſt ſolid Reply to the foregoing Suggeſtion is this; That the Diſpenſation is varied, and Laws about Church-Government are not the ſame under Chriſtianity, that they were under the Legal Oeconomy. Chriſt, the Supreme Head of the Church, hath not granted to one Miniſter of the Goſpel a Superiority above an other, ſuch as conſtitutes a Diſtinct Order, but their Commiſſion runs alike. Therefore if we will attend to the Verdict of Scripture, and the Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, this Controverſy is decided; for, according to theſe, one Clergyman is not to uſurp a Power and Authority over a great Number of other Clergymen, which is to be a *Bishop* in the modern Meaning of that Title.

Thirdly, I argue from our Saviour's expreſs Prohibition, *Matt.* xx. 25, 26. *Jeſus called them unto him, and ſaid, Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exerciſe Dominion over them, and they that are Great, exerciſe Authority upon them. But it ſhall not be ſo among you; but whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your Miniſter, and whoſoever will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant.* Upon which Words, one thus; * "Now I appeal to "any unprejudiced Perſon, Can there be any fuller "and clearer Proof of an Equality among the "Apoſtles?" He very rationally makes uſe of this

* Mr. *Bennet*. Confutat. of Popery. *part* 2. *chap.* 21.

Text (as others had done before him) againſt the *Supremacy* of the Biſhop of *Rome*; "Our Saviour", ſaith he, "poſitively affirms and declares, *It ſhall* "*not be ſo among you*, that is, one of you ſhall not "be above the other, and conſequently he cannot "be thought to have promiſed St. *Peter* a Power "over all the Reſt". But now, I make an other Uſe of his *Appeal to any unprejudiced Perſon*, and ask, Can there be any fuller and clearer Proof of an *Equality* among the Miniſters of the Goſpel, than theſe Words of our Saviour? For if none of them muſt exerciſe Dominion or Authority over the Reſt, then they muſt all be Equal. I ſay *none*; for if the *Apoſtles* themſelves were all Equal, certainly all other Miniſters are ſo too; for theſe cannot pretend to a higher Dignity than thoſe had conferred upon them, and actually enjoyed. The *Proteſtant* Writers (and thoſe of our own Church particularly) have ſufficiently proved, that the *Apoſtles* had a Parity of Power and Juriſdiction, and they make uſe of St. *Cyprian*'s Words, *Hoc erant utique & ceteri Apoſtoli quod fuit Petrus, pari conſortio prædîti, & honoris & poteſtatis:* Now if it was thus among them, if they equally ſhared in Honour and Power, if they did not aſſume Authority over one an other, then ſurely there is no ſuch Thing as Priority among any *other Miniſters* of Chriſt, who are their Succeſſors, only ſo far as it reſpects a Superiority or Order, which is practiſed even among Equals.

It is plain then, that in this Text of St. *Matthew*, our Saviour intended to put a Difference between *Clergymen* and *Laymen*, and not between Clergymen and themſelves. I ſay it is plain, that in thoſe Words, *It ſhall not be ſo with you*, he makes a Diſtinction between the Secular and Eccleſiaſtical Powers. There ought to be, ſaith he, a vaſt Difference between theſe two, becauſe they are vaſtly different in themſelves. The one is concerned about Temporal and Worldly Affairs, but the other

ther is converſant about the Things of Heaven: And would you have them both *alike* as to Superiority and Dominion? Becauſe one Potentate of the World is above the Reſt in his Territories, becauſe a Civil Magiſtrate hath more Power than the common People, Muſt therefore Spiritual Men imitate them in this? Is it lawful for them to maintain Pre-eminence and Superiority over thoſe of their own Function? Rather, one that impartially reads what our Saviour ſaith in the Place before cited, muſt needs wonder, that there is a Generation of Men who pretend to conform to Chriſt's Laws and Rules, and yet diametrically oppoſe them in maintaining a paramount Power and Authority in ſome of the Clergy above the Reſt: Which hath been the Root of infinite Miſchiefs in the Church, and is repugnant to the Nature and Conſtitution of the Evangelical Miniſtry. This aſpiring and ambitious Spirit began to exert itſelf in ſome of the Apoſtles, and they would needs be advanced above the Reſt, as St. *Matthew* tells us in the above-quoted Chapter: But he tells us likewiſe, how our Saviour checked their Ambition, and let them know, that though *Gentile-Princes* exerciſe Dominion, yet it is not lawful for *Chriſtian Miniſters* to do ſo. And there was an other early Inſtance of this affecting of Superiority and Inequality among Churchmen, which St. *John* takes Notice of in his Third Epiſtle, *Diotrephes*, ὁ φιλοπρωτεύων, *One that loved to have the Pre-eminence*, ver. 9. He aſpired to a Priority and Power over the other Elders of the Church, and therefore would *not receive* St. *John*, becauſe he knew he would remonſtrate againſt his Arrogancy and Ambition, as that which is contrary to the humble Spirit of Chriſtianity.

Here is the true Riſe of *Epiſcopacy*: Some Presbyters affected to be above the Reſt, they laboured to make themſelves Great, and conſequently other Presbyters were to be under them, and to

truckle to them. Hence we may date the Epiſcopal Superiority: Hence Biſhops came to be exalted above their Brethren. But certainly it is diſagreeable to the Simplicity of the Goſpel, for Spiritual Men to nouriſh Pomp and Grandour: And if they had any thing of the Goſpel-Spirit, they would not indulge themſelves in it. Certainly, it doth not become them to carry themſelves ſo high and lofty, like *Gentile* Prieſts and Pontifs. It were eaſy to prove, that the Exalting of Biſhops over Presbyters was the firſt Riſe of the *Papacy*. And it is as true, that *Prelacy*, wherever it hath got Footing ſince, hath made Way for *Popery*, both as to Doctrine and Worſhip, by indulging of Grandour and Pride. There is a natural Connection between theſe two, and though for ſome time they may, in ſome Places, be ſeparated, yet it cannot continue ſo long. To conclude this Head, If our Saviour's Authority be of any Force with Chriſtians, we cannot but rely on theſe Words of his, *It ſhall not be ſo among you*; you muſt not affect Pre-eminence and Superiority, over thoſe of your own Function eſpecially: You muſt aſſume no greater Power than what is common to all the other Brethren in the Miniſtry. And this (as ſome think) is backed by St. *Peter*, 1 Epiſt. *chap.* v. *ver.* 3. who forbids the *Elders to carry themſelves as Lords over God's Heritage*; or as ſome read it, *over the Clergy*. However, here is forbidden all Eccleſiaſtical Domineering, and if over the People, much more over their Brethren in the Miniſtry. This Practice is an abſolute Defiance of Chriſt's Command and Will: It is a plain and notorious departing from the Evangelical Preſcription. And all the Arguments that we are wont to bring againſt the *Popiſh Supremacy*, are valid againſt the *Superiority of Biſhops*, as to Juriſdiction.

But it will be ſaid, that there was an *Inequality* between the *Twelve Apoſtles* and the *Seventy Diſciples*,

ples, and this was of Chriſt's own Inſtitution. This is very warmly urged by thoſe that defend the Lordly Epiſcopacy. But there is nothing at all in this Plea, for it cannot be proved from any the leaſt Paſſage in the Evangelical Hiſtory, that the Twelve Apoſtles were Superiour to the Seventy Diſciples, as to any diſtinct Power and Juriſdiction. But the contrary appears from what is plainly recorded concerning them, namely, that both the Apoſtles and Diſciples had the ſame Commiſſion, *Matt.* x. 1, 5, 11, 16. compared with *Luke* x. 1, 2, 5, *&c.* They are employed about the ſame Work and Office, to wit, the Propagating of the Goſpel in the Cities of *Judea*; and by Chriſt himſelf they were both immediately authorized. So that no ſuperiour Power can be imagined to have reſided in one more than in the other: Conſequently the Objection concerning the Difference between the Twelve Apoſtles and the Seventy Diſciples, makes nothing for Epiſcopal Government. It is true, there was a Diſtinction between them as to ſome Circumſtances; but that was an arbitrary Thing, and we muſt needs confeſs it to be ſuch: Otherwiſe the very *Number* would be urged now; we muſt have juſt Twelve Biſhops, and Seventy Presbyters.

CHAP. V.

Fourthly, I argue from what the Scripture informs us of, namely, that there were more Biſhops than one in a City. Thus we read, that there was a Plurality of *Elders* or *Biſhops* at *Jeruſalem*, Acts xi. 30. and ſo likewiſe at *Antioch*, Acts xiii. 1. and at *Epheſus*, Acts xx. 17. For the ſtiffeſt Patrons of Epiſcopacy acknowledge, that by *Elders*, in theſe Places, are underſtood *Biſhops*. But if they

were *Biſhops*, as that Word is taken at this Day, then there was a Plurality of ſuch Biſhops in one City: But this is againſt the Suffrage of the *Antients*, as hath been urged before, and no Church-Hiſtory takes notice of any ſuch thing. A *Dioceſan Biſhop* is but of one City, and ſo the Cauſe of Epiſcopacy falls. But I proceed to other plain Inſtances recorded in the New Teſtament. Thus we read of the *Biſhops* of *Philippi*, Phil. i. 1. whereas there could not be more than One there; for all the Antients confeſs, that there was but one Biſhop in a City. But if we take the Word as we ought to do, then that which is meant in that Place is this, that *Philippi* being then the Metropolis of *Macedonia*, there were ſeveral Churches in it, and accordingly ſeveral Paſtors and Presbyters. We read that *Titus* was left at *Crete* to *ordain Elders in every City*, Tit. i. 5. and by theſe *Elders* are generally underſtood *Biſhops*. But we muſt remember, that there were an hundred Cities in *Crete* (whence *Crete* was called *Hecatompolis*, and *Urbibus centum ſpatioſa Creta* is to be found in one of *Seneca*'s Tragedies) and ſo according to this Account the *Ordaining of Elders in every City*, muſt ſignify, that an hundred Biſhops were fixed in the Iſle of *Crete*. Which if true, then the *Cretian Biſhops* were not like thoſe of late, who have ſome Hundreds of Miniſters under their Charge. Wherefore this Place cannot be alledged in Defence of *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy*, and conſequently is made Uſe of to no Purpoſe. Beſides, how is this conſiſtent with *Titus*'s being Biſhop of *Crete*, which is the general Opinion of Epiſcopal Divines.

But if we would take the Words aright, and underſtand them in the true Senſe, it is moſt probable that by *Elders* are meant only the ordinary Paſtors and Miniſters of particular Congregations of converted Chriſtians in *Crete*, and by *Cities* are meant no more than inhabited Places or Towns, as

is

is the uſual Acceptation of the Word, not only in the Scriptures in the Old and New Teſtament, but in Profane Writers. Particularly we find, that theſe hundred Cities are called by *Horace*, *centum oppida*, and *Eraſmus* renders κατὰ πόλιν, *oppidatim*. The Short therefore is, that *Titus* was appointed by St. *Paul* to ordain Presbyters and Paſtors in every Town or Place where there was a Congregation of Chriſtians converted to the Faith. This, queſtionleſs, is the true Senſe of the Place; and if we interpret it otherwiſe, we run counter to the Univerſal Sentiment and Confeſſion of the Antient Fathers, (as I ſhall ſhew anon), who tell us, that there was but one Biſhop in a City or Town in thoſe Primitive Times.

I might here make uſe of *James* v. 14. where, according to that Apoſtle's Rubrick, the Sick are bid to *call for the Elders of the Church*, i. e. the Presbyters or Biſhops: But they could not be Biſhops in the Senſe of thoſe we now contend with, becauſe more ſuch Biſhops than one could not be in one City or Town, and therefore more than one could not be *called for* in one Place. But this and the other Texts ought to be underſtood of Biſhops as they are of the ſame Signification with Presbyters, for ſo *ſeveral* Elders or Presbyters were in a City or Church in the Apoſtles Days, as I have ſhewed in the Churches of *Jeruſalem*, *Philippi*, *Antioch*, *Epheſus*; and the ſame might be proved of the Churches of *Rome*, *Corinth*, &c. where there were great Multitudes of Chriſtians; and that Care might be taken of them all, and that more Converts might be daily brought over to the Faith, there was need of more Presbyters than one to be ſet over them. And from this Plurality of Presbyters in one Place, I gather that Biſhops and Presbyters are the ſame. And beſides, theſe *Elders* or *Presbyters* who are here to be *called for*, cannot be Biſhops ſtrictly ſo called, (as ſome fancy) becauſe then

then it will follow, that it is the Office of the Biſhop perſonally to viſit every One that is ſick, and alſo, that every ſick Perſon is under an Obligation to ſend to him, yea, and to ſend to no others. But our Biſhops, and thoſe that defend them, will not admit of this, and therefore they muſt drop this Text for the Future.

Now, becauſe all this depends upon what I before-mentioned, that is, that there was of old but one Biſhop in a City, I muſt confirm this Aſſertion by the Teſtimony of thoſe who were the beſt Judges of it, and they are the Antient Fathers of the Chriſtian Church. *Ignatius*, in his Epiſtle to the *Philadelphians*, declares, that there is but *one Altar and one Biſhop in a Church*. And, I ſuppoſe, no ſober Man can bear that *ſophiſtical Diſtinction* which Mr. *Dodwell* makes uſe of, a *Supreme Altar*, and an *Inferiour Altar*, as if there were but one of the firſt Sort, but ſeveral of the Second: For if we diſtinguiſh about Altars, we may do ſo about the *Biſhop*, and ſay there was a Supreme and an Inferiour Biſhop. St. *Cyprian* ſaith * the very ſame with *Ignatius*; and in ſeveral Places he tells us, That *there is but one Biſhop in a Church at a time*. He lays this down as a certain Maxim, and this is the Man, who, above all the Fathers, is quoted about Church-Officers and Eccleſiaſtical Affairs. St. *Chryſoſtom* agrees with him, and ſaith †, *There could not be more Biſhops than one in a City*, and thence infers that by *Biſhops*, in *Phil.* i. are meant *Presbyters*. The like we find in St. *Jerom*'s Commentary on this Place, for the Reaſon he aſſigns why || by *Biſhops* here are to be underſtood *Presbyters*, is, becauſe in one City (as particularly in *Philippi*) there

* Unum Altare, unum Sacerdotium. *Lib.* 1. *Epiſt.* 8.

† Homil. 1. in Philip. 1.

|| Hîc per Epiſcopos, presbyteros intelligimus, non enim in unâ urbe plures Epiſcopi eſſe potuiſſent.

could

could not be a Plurality of Biſhops. And, in an other Place † he repeats this very Reaſon. Yea, he mentions it a Third Time, namely, in his Epiſtle to *Evagrius*, where (as hath been ſhewed) he proves Biſhops and Presbyters to be the ſame, from *Phil.* i. 1. and *Acts* xx. 28. And his Argument is this: The Paſtors of one Church, *viz. Philippi*, (in the Firſt Text) and ſo of one Church, *viz. Epheſus*, (in the Second Text) are meant, and not Biſhops, as they are now called; for there could not be more than one Biſhop in one Church. The ſame is ſaid by St. *Ambroſe*, upon the Third Chapter of the Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*. So *Theodoret* (whom I mentioned before) gives this as a Reaſon why thoſe that are called ἐπίσκοποι by St. *Paul* were *Presbyters* *, becauſe we read there of more ἐπίσκοποι than one in a City; whereas (ſaith he) there could not be above one ſingle Biſhop in a City, if by *Biſhop* be meant ſuch a one as had that Title in the Church in his Days. So *Oecumenius* and *Theophylact* poſitively aſſert, that by *Biſhops*, *Phil.* i. 1. are meant *Presbyters*, and give this Reaſon for it, becauſe there was no ſuch Thing as a Plurality of Biſhops in one City. And other *Fathers* might be alledged together with *Councils*, for confirming this. So that it is very ſtrange and ſurprizing that thoſe learned Men, Dr. *Hammond* and Biſhop *Pearſon* ſhould maintain the contrary.

Now, if theſe Things be ſo, it will follow, that the *Dioceſan Biſhops* are not the ſame with the New Teſtament Biſhops; for a Plurality of theſe was in one City, but of the other Sort one preſides over a Plurality of Cities. There were no ſuch

† Philippi una eſt Macedoniæ urbs, & in unâ certe civitate plures, ut nuncupantur Epiſcopi, eſſe non poterant. *Comment.* in *Tit.* i. 5.

* Ἐπισκόπους τὸς Πρεσβυτέρους καλεῖ, ἄλλως δὲ οὐδὲ οἴόντε ἦν πολλοὺς ἐπισκόπους μίαν πόλιν ποιμάνειν. Comment. in 1 *Tim.* iii. 1.

Biſhops

Biſhops as theſe in the Primitive Churches: The Scripture-Epiſcopacy was not one Man's preſiding over five Hundred or more Churches. Nor was this the Epiſcopacy in the Ages that ſoon ſucceeded the Apoſtles; as may be gathered from the promiſcuous Uſe of παροικία and διοίκησις among the *Greek* Writers of the Church: For though ſometimes they are diſtinguiſhed, and this Latter contains ſeveral of the Former, yet at other Times they are confounded by Eccleſiaſtical Writers. This you may ſee proved by *Juſtellus*, *Sirmond*, *Blondell*, and others. I will only mention one Place out of the *Apoſtles Canons*, as they are commonly called, * *A Biſhop*, ſaith the thirteenth Canon, *muſt not leave his* παροικίαν *his Parish, to go to an other, though importuned by many.* And in the next *Canon*, the Word παροικία is ſo uſed. Thus in *Euſebius*'s Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, this is the Word frequently for the Biſhop's Place of Governing, or his Cure over which he was ſet; for, generally, a Biſhop in the Primitive Times had no more than a Pariſh under him. And accordingly *Euſebius* mentions the *Parish of Epheſus*, lib. 3. cap. 4. and *the Parish of Carthage*, lib. 7. cap. 3. and ſeveral others, by which he means particular Churches and Congregations, containing as many Members (and no more) as could meet together at the ſame time in one Place; ſo that they were no bigger than our modern Pariſhes. It is true, the Chriſtians did not inhabit ſo near together as now (there being many Heathens among them), and therefore thoſe of the ſame Congregation were ſeveral Miles diſtant from the Common Meeting-Place, or Church. And on that Account the Extent of the Antient Pariſhes may be ſaid to be larger than now, but ſtill the Place where they aſſembled was one and the ſame.

* Ἐπίσκοπον μὴ ἐξεῖναι καταλιπόντα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παροικίαν ἑτέρᾳ ἐπιστῆσαι.

Afterwards

Afterwards it was otherwiſe, and the firſt Example to the contrary of what hath been mentioned, was at *Alexandria*, where there were two or three diſtinct Congregations under the ſame Biſhop: And the Reaſon of this was, becauſe the Chriſtians of *Alexandria* were exceedingly increaſed, and ſpread wide about, and on that Account were forced to have ſeparate Meetings. This was towards the latter End of the Second Century, when the Apoſtolical Form of Church-Government began to be altered, and the Limits of the Biſhop's Juriſdiction were enlarged, and exceeded that of a *Parish*, which was the Former and moſt Primitive Extent of it. Which is proved from this (which I had Occaſion to mention before) that the Biſhop himſelf, in his own Perſon, prayed and preached, and baptized thoſe that were to be admitted into the Church, and gave the other Sacrament to thoſe that were fit to receive it; and this was done by him in one Place, and at one Time: Whence it muſt needs follow, that their Dioceſes were not ſo large as the Biſhop's Dioceſes are now, but that they were much leſs, and that they were rather *Parishes*. From *Euſebius* * and *Theodoret* † we learn, that there were Biſhops of *ſmall Towns* and *Villages*. And St. *Jerom* mentions *Aſclepius* who was Biſhop of a little *African* Town. Though I don't deny (as was ſaid above) that afterwards the Biſhops Territories were enlarged, and that there were Places at a conſiderable Diſtance under the Government of one Biſhop. But from the Beginning it was otherwiſe, and ſo in the Firſt Ages of Chriſtianity. We have ſeen that it was the general Suffrage of the *Fathers*, that there could be but *One Biſhop* in a City at firſt: And we have it atteſted by Primitive Writers, that the Biſhops Charge and Flock was no greater than they could

* Eccleſ. Hiſt. *l.* 5. *c.* 16. † Lib. 5. c. 4.

look

look to themſelves. Which is inconſiſtent with the Notion of *Epiſcopacy*, as it is at this Day exerted.

CHAP. VI.

Fifthly, I will argue in the next Place from the *Identity* of the *Office* or *Work*, belonging to Biſhops and Presbyters. This is the very ſame, therefore Biſhops and Presbyters are the ſame. Here then I am to enquire what is the Particular Office and Employment of the Chief Eccleſiaſtical Miniſters in the Chriſtian Church: And as I go along through the ſeveral Particulars, I will prove, that *Presbyters* have an inherent Power and Authority to diſcharge thoſe Tasks: And, conſequently, there is no Diſtinction between theſe and *Bishops*.

Firſt, The leading Part of their Miniſtry is *Prayer*. *We will give our ſelves continually to Prayer*, Acts vi. 4. A Paſtor of the Church is Chriſt's Deputy; he partakes in a ſubordinate Manner of our Saviour's Offices, and particularly of the *Sacerdotal* one, which is to *Interceed* for the People, and to *Bleſs* them in God's Name. I think it will not be denied, that this belongs to every *Presbyter* as he is a Miniſter of Jeſus; he is to be an Interceſſor between God and the Flock, and he is to confer his Fatherly Benediction upon them. Herein therefore a *Presbyter* and a *Bishop* are the ſame Officer. Yea, not only to offer up Prayer publickly, but to viſit the *Sick*, *and pray over them* is required of *the Elders of the Church*, James v. 14. that is, ſaith Dr. *Hammond* on that Place, the *Bishops*. So then there can be no Diſpute as to this firſt Particular.

Secondly, The next Miniſterial Office is, *Inſtructing the Flock*. Preaching is the great Work of Miniſters,

niſters, as well as Prayer. And herein alſo they are Chriſt's Repreſentatives; they perſonate him in diſcharging the *Prophetical* Office, they teach and inſtruct the Church. And to this belong private Admonitions, Exhortations, and Reproofs; for it is incumbent on a Miniſter now (as well as upon the Apoſtles heretofore) not only to *teach publickly*, but *from Houſe to Houſe*, Acts xx. 20. He is to confute Errour, and to ſhew and lead Men into the right Way, and to ſtrengthen and comfort them in it; and this is to be done both privately and publickly, in the Diſcharge of the Miniſterial Function. Let any Man ſhew, if he can, the Difference between a Biſhop and a Presbyter, as to this. We are poſitively told, that *Overſeers* or *Biſhops* are *to feed the Church of God*, Acts xx. 28. and theſe Biſhops are the ſame with *the Elders* or *Presbyters of the Church*, ver. 17. We know what the Apoſtles ſaid, *We will give our ſelves continually to the Miniſtry of the Word*, Acts vi. 4. They ſpoke this, not as Apoſtles only, but in the general Notion, as Miniſters of the Goſpel. And therefore that excellent Father St. *Jerom*, who was wont to ſpeak Truth, though he knew it would be diſliked, blames * the Cuſtom that was in ſome Churches in *Africk*, where the Biſhops only preached, and Presbyters were not ſuffered to do it: He utterly condemns that arrogant Monopolizing of Preaching.

Thirdly, An other Paſtoral Duty is *Adminiſtring the Sacraments*; that is, Receiving and Admitting of Perſons into the Boſom of the Church by *Baptiſm*, and Delivering the *Lord's Supper* to thoſe that are worthy of it. This is the Common Office of all Preaching-Elders, or Ordained-Presbyters: And *Biſhops* cannot be ſaid to differ from them as to this. Hitherto there is generally a Conſent;

* Paſſimæ conſuetudinis eſt in quibuſdam Eccleſiis tacere Presbyteros, & preſentibus Epiſcopis non loqui. *Epiſt. ad Nepotian.*

but

but now I muſt proceed to the remaining Particulars about which the great Diſpute is.

Fourthly, There is no Difference (whatever ſome pretend) between Biſhops and Presbyters, as to the Exerting of their Miniſterial Power in *Ordaining* of others to the Miniſtry. For truly, this ſeems to me to be good arguing, If the Presbyters may *pray* and *preach*, and *baptize* and *celebrate the other Sacrament* (which are higher than Ordination) they may *Ordain*. If Biſhops and Presbyters be diſtinct Officers, it is certain this Diſtinction muſt lye in the Chief and Principal Offices; and thoſe are the *Sacramental* Ones, according to the Judgement of thoſe Perſons I am dealing with: They hold, that theſe are the Chief of the Sacred Actions belonging to the Clergy. Now, they confeſs, that Presbyters may adminiſter the Sacraments, yea, even Deacons are allowed by our Church to aſſiſt in delivering the Euchariſt. Can any rational Man then think that Presbyters are not capable of Ordaining or Conſecrating Miniſters, ſeeing this is an inferiour Office in Compariſon of Conſecrating the Elements in the Euchariſt? If the Biſhop and Presbyter be equal, as to this greateſt Power, (as it is eſteemed) we may conclude them ſo as to all others: And particularly as to Ordination, which is to give ſome Perſons Authority to exerciſe their Miniſterial Office. Wherefore, that there may be a conſtant Supply of Paſtors in the Church; this Power is given to all Goſpel-Miniſters. They are authorized to join in this ſolemn Work of ſetting a-part certain Perſons to officiate in Holy Things.

But though hitherto (as I have ſaid) we have had no Opponents, yet now they come in upon us very faſt, and with a loud Cry tell us, that *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* differ in this, that the Former have Power to *Ordain*, but the Latter have not. Wherefore, becauſe one of the main Scruples of our Adverſaries is about *Ordination*, I will the more largely inſiſt

inſiſt upon this Head, and prove, that Ordination is not lodged only in thoſe whom they now call Biſhops, but that it is common to Presbyters with them. Scripture is ſtill the Judge that we appeal to, and from that we ſhall learn how to decide this Controverſy. That Ordination is not appropriated to Biſhops, appears from *Acts* xiii. 1, 2, *&c.* Certain Men in the Church of *Antioch faſted and prayed, and laid their Hands on Paul and Barnabas.* Theſe Men were but *Prophets*, who were at moſt but equal to *Presbyters*; yet theſe ordained *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and ſet them a-part for the Miniſtry, as was commanded by God, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work whereunto I have called them.* That Man hath a great Mind to be laughed at, who hath the Confidence to ſay, that theſe Perſons there mentioned were *Biſhops*, that is, in the modern Senſe. No; It is evident from this Place, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ordained not by ſuch, but by Presbyters; and that a Presbyter may ordain, becauſe Ordination is in his Power as he is a Presbyter. It goes along with his Order and Office, and there is not one Text of Scripture that debars him of this Right.

But there are ſome that aſſure it to him, as that which I have now mentioned, and that other in 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. where we read, that *Timothy* was ordained *by the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*; that is, the ſeveral Presbyters met together: As *Ignatius*, in his Epiſtle to the *Trallians*, uſes the Word πρεσβυτέριον, and as *Cyprian* in his Third Book *Epiſt.* 11. and *Book* 2.. *Epiſt.* 8, and 10. uſes the Word *Presbyterium.* And in this Senſe, namely, to ſignify a *Company of Elders*, (tho' not of this Sort) the Word is to be taken in *Luke* xxii. 66. and *Acts* xxii. 5. The Apoſtle then in the forementioned Text ſpeaks of the *Presbyters* or *Elders*, who laid their Hands upon him at his Ordination. If it had been ſaid, *by the Laying on of the Hands*

of the Epiſcopacy, it would have been looked upon as ſtrange if we had not granted that ſuch Words plainly imported that Biſhops had hence Authority to Ordain. Why then are we averſe from granting that theſe Words authorize Presbyters to exerciſe that Office? And it is certain, that this actual Impoſing of their Hands (which the Apoſtle here mentions) ſhews that they had a Power inherent in them to Ordain. They were not only preſent, and conſenting, but they actually and perſonally uſed this Ceremony; which argues their Authority to ſet a-part Perſons for the Miniſtry. And we read alſo, that St. *Paul*, at the ſame Time, laid his Hands on *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* i. 6. which he did as he was a *Presbyter*; and therefore, the *Presbytery* in that fore-named Place, comprehends St. *Paul* as well as the other Presbyters. From theſe and other Places it is plain, that Ordination is not a Peculiar belonging to the Biſhops of the new Denomination, but that all Presbyters, at firſt, Ordained; though afterwards, when Biſhops were conſtituted by aſpiring Churchmen, that Power was particularly reſtrained to them. But it was not thus in the Primitive Conſtitution of Things, becauſe there was no other Order above Presbyters: For, as I have ſhewed, and ſhall further make good, Biſhops were, and are no more than Presbyters. And, at this Day, Biſhops themſelves lay Hands on others, meerly as they are *Presbyters*; and conſequently bare Presbyters may do the ſame.

But here the *Fathers* of the Church are alledged, to confront all this, and remarkable Inſtances are brought to prove, that Ordination was not in the Power of Presbyters. St. *Chryſoſtom*, and St. *Jerom*, who (as we have heard) make no Difference between a Biſhop and Presbyter, as to any other Things, yet make an Exception as to *Ordination*.

The

The * Former expreſsly tells us that Biſhops are above Presbyters as to this Privilege only: But then you muſt remember, that he doth not mention here any *Divine Right*, but only refers to the Cuſtom in the *Church* at that time. And we muſt conſider this alſo, that this Good Father being a Biſhop himſelf, was loth to level Biſhops wholly with the Presbyters, and take away all peculiar Power from them. As to the Latter, St. *Jerom*, it can't be denied that he hath theſe Words, (as ſerious as he is againſt the Superiority of Biſhops) † *Quid facit, exceptâ Ordinatione, Epiſcopus, quod Presbyter non faciat?* To which this ſatisfactory Anſwer may be given, that he doth not ſay it was ſo in the Apoſtles Times; for he had often aſſerted, that Biſhops and Presbyters were the ſame *then*, and conſequently had the Power of Ordaining: Wherefore they are vain who underſtand St. *Jerom*, as if he here denied Ordination to belong to Presbyters. No; he only ſpeaks of his own Age and Times, when Biſhops were diſtinct from Presbyters, and in ſome Churches were a different Degree and Order, which is not denied by *Salmaſius* and *Blondel*, and other great Champions of Presbytery: Yea, they acknowledge that they became a diſtinct Order long before *Jerom*'s Time. It is no Wonder, therefore, that he, relating to this Uſage which was crept into the Church, owns that Ordination was peculiar to the Biſhops. But he could not ſay ſo of the Apoſtles times, when the Diſtinction between Biſhops and Presbyters was not known in the Church: Which is evident from what he ſo *often* aſſerts about that Matter. And beſides, from this Father's own Words, in an other Place, we can make it evident, that he ſpoke of the Cuſtom and Practice of the Time he lived in, not of the Right of the

* Chryſoſt. Hom. 11. in Epiſt. ad Tim.
† Epiſt. ad Evagr.

Thing; for he tells us expreſsly, in his Commentary on *Zephaniah*, *That Prieſts who baptize, and who conſecrate the Lord's Supper, which is the greater Employment, lay on Hands, and ordain, and make Levites and other Prieſts, which in Truth is but the leſs.*

But it will be ſaid, the Practice of the Antient Churches ſhould be our Guide in this Caſe: And from thence it appears, that Ordination by meer Presbyters was utterly condemned, and pronounced invalid. Thus when *Novatus*, a Presbyter, ordained *Feliciſſimus* Deacon, it was againſt the Mind of *Cyprian* the Biſhop, and of the whole Church, and was accordingly voted null. So when *Colluthus*, a Presbyter of the Church of *Alexandria*, Contemporary with *Arius*, took upon him to Ordain, and did ordain *Iſchyras* and others, their Ordination was pronounced void by the Council of *Alexandria*, becauſe *Colluthus* was only a Presbyter. If I could not return an Anſwer to theſe Inſtances, yet it would not in the leaſt prejudice the Cauſe I am maintaining; that is, that the Office of Biſhops and Presbyters was the ſame in the Times of the *Apoſtles*. I grant, that ſome time afterwards the Caſe was otherwiſe, and there were Biſhops that aſſumed this Power to themſelves; but they had no Right to do ſo, becauſe all their Right in this Nature muſt have been derived from *Scripture*, which gives no Allowance to this Practice. But abſtracting from this, it were eaſy to give an other Anſwer to the Inſtance of *Colluthus* and *Iſchyras*; for ſeveral Things are here to be ſaid, and that moſt truly. There were certain particular Reaſons that prevailed with the Biſhops of the *Alexandrian* Council, to diſlike *Colluthus*'s conferring of Orders at that time on *Iſchyras* and ſome others. For 1. This Ordination was in Contempt of the *Eccleſiaſtical Canons*, which were, it ſeems, in Force at that time in the *Alexandrian* Churches. It could not

not be expected but that they would maintain and aſſert their own particular Conſtitutions. 2. This Ordination was performed *out of the Dioceſs*, and ſo on that Account was Irregular, and could not but fall under the Cenſure of the Council. 3. It was performed by *Schiſmaticks*; for ſuch is the Character given us of *Colluthus*, and the Reſt concerned in this Affair. 4. It was *without a Title*, and for that Reaſon was Uncanonical, and therefore was taken Notice of and condemned. Theſe Conſiderations, I hope, may ſatisfy any ſober and rational Perſon.

CHAP. VII.

BUT becauſe the Aſſerters of Epiſcopacy, as now it is conſtituted, inſiſt much on theſe Inſtances, though they were a long Time after the *Apoſtles* Days, and though they were grounded on particular Reaſons, I will produce Inſtances alſo, namely, ſuch as corroborate Ordination by Presbyters without Biſhops. I will make it appear, that this is authorized by the Practice of the Antient Church, and by the deliberate Judgement and Approbation of the Learnedeſt Fathers. At firſt it is not to be doubted, that Presbyters ordained Presbyters, becauſe it is granted that there were *no Biſhops at firſt*; and ſurely, even according to the Conceſſion of our Epiſcopal Men, they could not give that Power to others, which they had not themſelves; therefore there was a Neceſſity of it at that time. Yea, afterwards we have Reaſon to think that this was done, and particularly in the Church of *Alexandria*, as may be gathered from that Paſſage in St. *Jerom*'s Epiſtle to *Evagrius*, * *The*

* Nam & in Alexandriâ à Marco Evangeliſtâ uſque ad Heraclam & &

Presbyters, ſaith he, *of Alexandria did always chooſe one out of their Number, and exalted him to a higher Degree; and being thus advanced, he was ſtiled Biſhop.* And he compares it to *an Army's chooſing and making a Commander*, which was uſual in thoſe Times, as well as before. This neceſſarily implies that the Presbyters of *Alexandria ordained* their Biſhop; for *chooſing him*, and *placing him in a higher Degree* import no leſs. And he tells us in the ſame Place, that this Practice of the *Alexandrian* Presbyters, of *Ordaining* their own Biſhops, was continued from St. *Mark's* Time, to the Days of *Heraclas* and *Dionyſius*, which was almoſt two hundred Years. This is confirmed by *Eutychius*, Patriarch of *Alexandria*, (quoted by Mr. *Selden*, in his *Origines Eccleſ. Alexandrinæ*), who, from the Records of that Church, reports that the Presbyters there, in the Primitive Times, choſe and laid their Hands on him whom they deſigned for Biſhop, and they ordained an other in his Room. So that it appears hence, that Presbyters ordained Biſhops and Presbyters: And this (as *Eutychius* relates) was even from the Time of *Mark* the Evangeliſt.

This very Thing was alſo antiently done in the *Egyptian* Churches, if we may believe a very credible Writer, either *Ambroſe*, or *Hilary* the Deacon, .* *Apud Egyptios Presbyteri conſignant, ſi preſens non ſit Epiſcopus.* Where, by *Conſignation*, is meant Laying on of Hands in Ordination. Or, ſuppoſe it meant of *Confirmation*, yet it is not to be doubted that thoſe that did the one, might do the other upon Occaſion. And St. *Auguſtine*, or whoever was the Author of the *Queſtions out of both*

& Dionyſium Epiſcopos, Presbyteri ſemper unum ex ſe electum, in excelſiori gradu collocatum, Epiſcopum nominabant, quomodo ſi exercitus Imperatorem faciat.

* In 4 cap. Epiſt. ad Epheſ.

Teſtaments,

Teſtaments, aſſures us, * That *not only in Alexandria, but through all Egypt, Ordination was wont to be performed by Presbyters, in the Time of the Vacancy of a Biſhoprick, or in the Biſhop's Abſence.* Which ſhews where the Power reſided, and that when Biſhops laid on their Hands in Ordination, they did it as *Presbyters.*

That is an unexceptionable Inſtance, which is tranſmitted to us by † *Caſſianus*, and it was towards the End of the Fourth Century: One Abbot *Daniel* was made a Deacon by *Paphnutius*, who was but a Presbyter, and afterwards he was made a Presbyter by him; and the Ordination was not diſapproved of by the then Biſhop of *Alexandria*, in whoſe Juriſdiction this *Caſſianus* and *Daniel* were. This aſcertains us not only of the Matter of Fact, but of the Validity of it.

I might add further, that it is aſſerted by *Hilary* in the fore-ſaid *Ambroſe*'s Comment. on *Eph.* iv. that Presbyters || choſe and ordained their Biſhop. And if they ordained Biſhops, there is no Queſtion whether they did the ſame to Presbyters.

Next, I will mention Pope *Leo the Firſt*, in the Middle of the Fifth Century, who, when ſome Presbyters had taken upon them to Ordain, was conſulted thereupon; and his Reſolution of the Caſe was this, That § if the Ordination was with the Conſent of the Biſhops of thoſe Churches, to which thoſe Perſons who had ſo Ordained belonged, the Ordination was lawful and good. Which could not be, unleſs Presbyters had in them a Power and Right of Ordaining.

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* In Alexandriâ & per totum Egyptum, ſi deſit Epiſcopus, conſecrat Presbyter. *Quæſt.* 101.

† Collat. 4. cap. 1.

|| —— Ut non ordo, ſed meritum crearet Epiſcopum multorum ſacerdotum judicio conſtitutum. *Comment.* in *Eph.* iv.

§ Si Ordinatio eorum cum conſenſu & judicio præſidentium facta eſt, poteſt rata haberi. *Epiſt.* 92. ad Ruſtic.

The Ordination of *Pelagius* I. an other Biſhop of *Rome*, who ſucceeded *Vigilius*, in the middle of the 6th Century, is remarkable, as it is related in his * Life: He was ordained by two Biſhops and one ſingle Presbyter, this laſt ſupplying the Place of a Biſhop, becauſe at that time there were not three Biſhops to be had, the reſt withdrawing themſelves from his Communion; and yet this Ordination was held Canonical. The Church of *Rome* owns it as valid to this day, which ſhews that it is their judgement that a bare Presbyter hath Power to confer Orders. And this is founded on an other Sentiment, that as to conferring of Orders a Presbyter and a Biſhop are alike, that is, they are both of them ſufficient to perform that Task.

Again, Ordination by Presbyters is clear from the antient Conſtitution of the *Chorepiſcopi* or *Country Biſhops* frequently mentioned by Fathers and Councils. Theſe were Deputies or Vicars of the Biſhops, and were authorized to confer the Leſſer Orders (viz. of Lecturers and Subdeacons) in Country Towns and Villages, tho' they themſelves were but ſimple *Presbyters*. And as for the higher Orders of Presbyter and Deacon, they were forbid to admit any to theſe *without the Command or Letters of the Biſhop*, as the Words of the Twelfth Canon of the Council of *Ancyra* run, *A. D.* 314. Whence it is clear that they might ordain Presbyters and Deacons by the Biſhop's Command, or by receiving Letters from him, though he was not preſent, nor laid his Hands on the Perſons ordained. And this Practice we find confirmed by an other Council not long after, wherein the *Chorepiſcopi* were not permitted to confer the higher Orders of Prieſt and Deacon δίχα τῦ ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐπισκόπυ, without the Leave of the Biſhop of that City which

* Anaſt. Lib. Pontif. in vitâ Pelag. 1.

they

they belonged to, as we read in the Tenth Canon of the Council of *Antioch*, which was convened about the middle of the 4th Century. And the ſame is related by *Iſidore de Offic. Eccleſ.* l. 2. c. 6. who renders χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου *præter conſcientiam Epiſcopi*, i. e. without the Biſhops Knowledge and Conſent. But by the Conſent and Permiſſion of the Biſhop they might ordain Prieſts and Deacons, though they were but Presbyters themſelves. Which is a good Argument to prove that Ordination by Presbyters alone is valid. And thus we ſee from particular Inſtances and Examples amongſt the Antient Churches that Presbyters ſometimes ordained, and that Ordination was accounted Authentick.

I might add to all that hath been ſaid, what *Onuphrius* in his *Chronicon* relates, that mere *Preſbyters* preſided over the Church of *Rome* for almoſt a whole Year, *A. D.* 259. the Biſhop then being dead, and the See vacant, the Heat of Perſecution hindering at that time the Choice of a Biſhop. But it is very probable that within that Space of Time thoſe *Presbyters* had occaſion to *Ordain*, and to do other Epiſcopal Offices; and it is not to be doubted that they did them, for elſe they would not have taken upon them the Pontifical Office.

Yea, even "*in the Primitive Church* (as Biſhop "*Stillingfleet* hath obſerved in his *Irenicum*, Part 2. "Chap 6.) the Presbyters all acted in common for "the Welfare of the Church, and either did or "might ordain others to the ſame Authority with "themſelves, becauſe the intrinſical Power of Order "is equally in them and in thoſe who were after "appointed Governours over the Presbyteries. And "the Collation of Orders doth come from the "Power of Order, and not merely from the Power "of Juriſdiction".

And as for the *Church of England* itſelf, it is evident from her Conſtitution and Practice, that Or-

Ordination is ſeated in the *Presbyters* as well as the *Biſhops*, for they jointly lay their Hands on the Perſons to be ordained. Thus it is a Conjunct Act, and ſhews that they both concur to Ordination: and why then do any of our Church place it in *one* of theſe only? The ſhort is, when the Presbyters lay on their Hands, they Ordain, or they do not Ordain; if they do, then the Controverſy is at an end; if they do not, then their laying on of Hands is to no purpoſe, and is wholly inſignificant: which none will acknowledge, for it is the Impoſition of Hands that makes Ordination: And therefore, ſeeing in our Church Presbyters lay their Hands on thoſe that come to be ordained, as well as the Biſhop; and ſeeing there are three Presbyters to one Biſhop, it is not to be queſtioned that the Office of Ordaining appertains to Presbyters, and is not ſolely inveſted in the Biſhops. This was the Senſe and Perſuaſion of the Greateſt Men of the Church of *England*, as Archbiſhop *Cranmer*, Biſhop *Juel*, Dr. *Fulke*, Biſhop *Carleton*, Biſhop *Davenant*, Dr. *Field*, Mr. *Maſon*; who all held that Presbyters, as Presbyters, may ordain others to that Office. And all thoſe other Excellent Writers of our Church, who have defended the Validity of *our Biſhops Conſecration* and *our Prieſts Ordination* at the Reformation, may be ſaid to patronize this Cauſe; for Part of that which is alledged in behalf of Our Ordinations againſt the Papiſts may be made uſe of in Vindication of the Lawfulneſs of Ordination by Presbyters. To this purpoſe alſo may be conſulted thoſe * Foreigners that have writ in Defence of the *Proteſtant Miniſtry*, and the *Ordination in the Reformed Churches*.

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* Sadeel Reſp. ad Turrian. de Ordinationibus Miniſtrorum &c. Hunn. Reſp. ad Lancelot. Pſeudo Miniſterium. Giſ. Voet. Diſp. de Vocat. Miniſtr. J. Wendelin. de Antiſtit. Evang. legit. vocatione & ordinatione. Petr. Molin.

But

But one Thing I muſt not forget in our own Church and Nation, there is this remarkable Paſſage in Archbiſhop *Spotſwood's Hiſtory of Scotland*: "When ſome (ſaith he) were to be ordained Biſhops "for *Scotland* at *London-Houſe*, A. D. 1609. a "Queſtion was moved by *Lancelot Andrews*, Biſhop "of *Ely*, touching the Conſecration of the *Scottiſh* "Biſhops, who, as he ſaid, *muſt firſt be ordained* "*Presbyters, as having received no Ordination from* "*a Biſhop*: the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* Dr. *Bancroft*, who was by, maintained that *thereof there* "*was no Neceſſity, ſeeing where Biſhops could not* "*be had, the Ordination given by Presbyters muſt* "*be eſteemed lawful.* This was applauded by the "*other Biſhops*, and *Ely* acquieſced; and at the "Day and in the Place appointed the three *Scottiſh* "Biſhops were conſecrated". Which ſufficiently ſhews what was the Sentiment and Practice of *Our Church*. And from what hath been ſaid it appears that *Ordination* was not the ſole Prerogative of Dioceſan Biſhops. And from all the foregoing Particulars we may gather that the Work or Employment of the Biſhops and Presbyters is the ſame. Which I ſhall further evince in the

5th and laſt Particular, which is this, That there is no Difference between Biſhops and Presbyters as to the *Exerciſe of Diſcipline*, and the *Rule* and *Government in the Church*. Which is evident from this, that the Miniſters of the Goſpel are promiſcuouſly ſtiled προϊσάμενοι, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 12. ἡγούμενοι, *Heb.* xiii. 12. ἐπισκοποῦντες, 1 *Pet.* v. 2. ἐπίσκοποι, *Acts* xx. 28. and have other the like Titles; which is an Argument that *Ruling* (for all theſe Terms are thought to import ſo much) belonged to them all, and that it was not peculiar to any Order above Presbyters, and that there were no ſuch Officers as Biſhops ſuperiour to Presbyters. Hence One of the Chief Men of the Epiſcopal Perſuaſion acknowledges

ledges that there were no ſuch peculiar * *fixed Rulers as Biſhops in the Church at firſt, and for that reaſon he ſaith there is no mention of them in either of the Epiſtles to the Theſſalonians.* And he might have added, that when there is mention of them, no peculiar Governours are intended; but that the Work of the Miniſtry, which partly conſiſts in Ruling, was in common to all the Preaching Miniſters. For we muſt not be prejudiced from what was ſaid before about *Ruling Elders*, as if they engroſſed all *Ruling* to themſelves, and as if thoſe that were Preaching Presbyters were not properly Rulers; for (as I have cautioned againſt this Miſtake already) the former Sort of Elders had a Rule proper to themſelves, and of an other Kind, and were not to intermeddle with thoſe Acts of Church-Government which are peculiar to the Clergy: for indeed, theſe only in the ſtricteſt Senſe are the *Spiritual Governours* of Chriſt's Church. Theſe alone are ſaid *to feed the Flock*, that is, not only to Teach, but to Rule and Govern it, for all agree that ποιμαίνειν ſignifies no leſs.

I think it will not be denied that *the Power of the Keys* is the greateſt Inſtance of *Eccleſiaſtical Government*; and this we are certain was given to all Miniſters of the Goſpel, and therefore they are all alike. The reading of *Mat.* xviii. 18. and *John* xx. 23. will put this out of all doubt: for there, we find, is Power given by Chriſt to all the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, that is, all the Miniſters and Paſtors of the Church, *to remit and to retain Sins, to bind and to looſe*, namely, they have all of them an abſolute Authority and Right in themſelves to judge Spiritual Offenders, and to pronounce Sentence againſt them, and to caſt them out of the Church; as alſo, they have Authority to judge of the Fitneſs of thoſe that are to be taken again into the

* Mr. *Dodwell* de jure Laic. Sacerdot. cap. 3. ſect. 14.

Church,

Church, and they have Power actually to receive them into the Boſom of the Church, upon their Repentance. To act thus with Authority, and to have full Power to reſtrain and curb all Criminals, and to ſee that Chriſt's Laws be obſerved, and his Diſcipline and Government be not deſpiſed, belongs to *every Presbyter* and *Paſtor* of the Chriſtian Church; for ſuch a one is a Miniſter of the Goſpel, and a lawful Succeſſor of the Apoſtles. And therefore to make a Difference between the Juriſdiction of *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*, and to fix the *Government of the Church* in the Former, and to exclude the Latter, is evidently againſt the Laws of Chriſt. Can any Man think that there is an Office in the Church above Presbyters, when he finds in Scripture that Presbyters have Power *to remit and to retain Sins, to bind and to looſe?* which certainly is the higheſt Dignity that a Clergyman is capable of. Nothing can exceed this; and yet every Miniſter of Chriſt, as ſuch, every Presbyter, as ſuch, hath this Power. And it is derived from Chriſt; for as I obſerved before that Chriſt's Miniſters partake of his *Prieſtly* and *Prophetick* Office, ſo it is as true that it is his Will and Pleaſure that his Miniſters ſhould in ſome degree imitate his *Kingly Office*, that is, that they ſhould rule and govern in the Church. And this is the inſeparable Right and Priviledge of *every* Chriſtian Miniſter or Paſtor.

How directly contrary then is it to the Laws and Conſtitutions of the New Teſtament, yea, how abſurd and ridiculous is it, that the Praying and Preaching Miniſter ſhould be forced to repair to a Ruling Miniſter or Biſhop, upon all occaſions, becauſe forſooth he can do nothing of himſelf, he is a Cypher in his Pariſh? He hath not Leave given him to exert that Power which his Great Maſter Chriſt Jeſus thought fit to confer equally on all the Spiritual Shepherds of the Church. A *Lay-Chancellor* muſt be conſulted, a *Biſhop's Secretary* or *Chaplain*

Chaplain muſt be conferred with, who hath nothing to do with the People of the Pariſh, and yet the Miniſter of the Pariſh can do nothing himſelf. And yet the generality of the Beneficed Clergy are called *Rectors*: The Law gives them that Name and Title, but they have no *Paſtoral Regiment*. Theſe Things certainly ought not to be; and we have Examples in Eccleſiaſtical Writers that will confute this Practice, by letting us ſee that Presbyters have excommunicated Offenders without the Authority or Conſent of the Biſhop. Thus the Preſbyters of the Church of *Carthage* inflicted this cenſure on the Presbyter of *Didda* and his Deacon; and *Cyprian* himſelf * applauded this Action. An other Example of this is given us by one that is a zealous Friend of *Epiſcopacy*; "At *Epheſus* (ſaith "he) *Noetus the Patripaſſian* with ſome of his "Followers was cited before the Presbyters, and "twice admoniſhed, and at length expelled out of "the Church. Not long after this the Presbyters of "*Rome* excommunicated ſome and abſolved others, "as there was occaſion". Dr. *Potter* of Epiſcopacy, chap. 5. page 394. It is true, the Sees were vacant, but theſe Presbyters might have delayed their Cenſures 'till Biſhops were ſet over them: But ſeeing they did not, it is plain that they thought themſelves capable, as they were Presbyters, of exerting theſe Eccleſiaſtical Acts of Excommunication and Abſolution. And from other Inſtances it might be proved that the Power of Publick Cenſures and exerciſing Diſcipline, which are high Acts of *Eccleſiaſtical Government*, is not appropriated to *Biſhops*, but that it is common to *Presbyters*.

And doubtleſs it was intended by the Holy Ghoſt that the ſame Perſons ſhould be inveſted with

* Integrè & cum diſciplinâ feciſtis, fratres chariſſimi, quòd conſilio collegarum meorum qui præſentes erant, Gaio Didenſi presbytero, & diacono ejus, cenſuiſtis non communicandum. *Cypr. Epiſt.* 34.

the

the Authority and Power of *Ruling* and of *Inſtructing*, as is plain from the *Commiſſion* given to them all without any Diſtinction or Reſerve. This made a very Learned * Writer ſay, that *the Power of Ordaining, of Excommunicating, and whatever elſe is ſaid to be proper to a Biſhop, belongs habitually and* in actu primo *to every Presbyter:* and afterwards he ſaith, quoad aptitudinem *the Power remains in every Presbyter.* He grants likewiſe that the Biſhops heretofore were made ſuch by the Presbyters; that is, theſe conſented that one of them ſhould be their Chief: So that the Epiſcopal Power and Juriſdiction are derived from the Presbytery. Which ſhews that that Power was originally inherent in them, and that they all equally had right at firſt to rule the Church, but by a voluntary Act of their own transferred this Power to one ſingle Man. It was by their own Conſent and Compliance that they ſuffered themſelves to be reſtrained as to their Juſt Power, and ſubmitted to confer it on thoſe whom they choſe as their Heads and Governours. But, as I have often had occaſion to ſay, from the Beginning it was not ſo. Juriſdiction and Rule (no leſs than Ordination and other Priviledges before mentioned) were beſtowed by Chriſt on all the Evangelical Paſtors of the Church; for this appertains to their *Work* and *Employment.* Theſe being the ſame as to all, it was neceſſary they ſhould be inſtated in the ſame Powers. This, I believe, will not be denied by any that are unprejudiced, and have not blemiſhed their Judgements with corrupt Notions of Things. To ſuch, I doubt not, it is manifeſt that the Modern Notion of a *Biſhop*, that is, one Miniſter ſet over the reſt of the Clergy with a Power to excommunicate, ordain, and exert all Acts of Government, is no Scripture Notion, and that ſuch a Biſhop is no Scripture Biſhop. For

* Stillingfleet, Irenic. part. 2. chap. 4.

from

from what we meet with in the Apoſtles Writings it appears that one Presbyter had not any Power or Juriſdiction more than an other, but that they were all equal. Every Paſtor of a Church was a Biſhop and Ruler of his Flock. Teaching and Governing did reſide in the ſame Perſons; but the dividing of theſe two hath produced that Miſchief in the Church, which we can never ſufficiently deplore.

Sixthly, An other Argument from Scripture to prove the Equality, yea the Indentity of Biſhops and Presbyters is this, that We read but of *One Ordination of them.* The ſame Impoſition of Hands makes a Perſon both *Prieſt* and *Biſhop:* therefore there are no Biſhops ſuperiour to Prieſts or Presbyters. This is an Argument made uſe of by the Antient Fathers of the Church. St. *Jerom* gathers the Identity of Biſhops and Preſbyters from St. *Paul*'s mentioning only the Ordination of *Biſhops* and *Deacons*, not of *Presbyters.* His Words are theſe: *St. Paul in his Epiſtles to Titus* and *Timothy ſpeaks of the Ordaining of a Biſhop and a Deacon, but is wholly ſilent about Presbyters, becauſe a Presbyter is comprehended in a Biſhop.* Thence that of St. *Ambroſe* (if he was the Author), † *There is but one Ordination of a Biſhop and a Presbyter:* and he knew it from his own Experience; for even when he was an unbaptized Catechumen, and a Civil Magiſtrate in *Milan*, he was elected Biſhop by the People of that Place, and knew not what it was to be a *Presbyter*, if a *Biſhop* and a *Presbyter* had not been the ſame. We read that other Biſhops were choſen out of the *Laity*, and were neither Presbyters nor Deacons. And as for Deacons, it was the Antient Practice to make

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* Ad Titum & ad Timotheum de ordinatione Epiſcopi & Diaconi dicitur, de Presbyteris omnino reticetur, quia in Epiſcopo & Presbyter continetur. *Epiſt. ad Evagr.*

† In 1 Tim. 3.

them

them *Biſhops* without making them Presbyters firſt. Many Inſtances there are of this: Thus *Cæcilian* was advanced to be Biſhop of *Carthage* before he was Presbyter. *Optat. lib.* 1. *p.* 41. *Athanaſius* was taken from the Deaconſhip to the Biſhoprick of *Alexandria*. *Epiphan. hæreſ.* 69. *Heraclides* was ordained by *Chryſoſtom* Biſhop of *Epheſus*, though he was but of the degree of a Deacon. From which Inſtances it is evident that *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* are not diſtinct Orders; for if they were, there muſt be a *double Ordination* of them, which we ſee was not practiſed by the Antients, and without doubt they conformed themſelves to the Firſt Pattern. Conſult the Records of the New Teſtament, and you will find that there is no Ordination of a Biſhop as diſtinct from a Presbyter; no Presbyter was ordained twice, and by a ſecond Impoſition of Hands made a Biſhop. Whence we rationally gather (as the aforeſaid Writers did) that *Presbyter* and *Biſhop* are not two diſtinct Orders; for it is *Ordination* that makes and gives the *Diſtinction* of Orders. Thus far I have argued for the Equality of the Clergy from what the *Holy Scripture* ſuggeſts to us. And truly I reckon the Parity of the Miniſters of the Goſpel to be as clearly delivered and aſſerted in the Evangelical Writings as we could expect. According to what theſe diſcover to us, there were no Biſhops in thoſe firſt Times that were greater and higher than Presbyters.

CHAP. VIII.

BUT though from the Goſpel we have a true Account of this Matter, yet there are *Conſiderations* and *Arguments* of *an other Sort*, which I will alſo make uſe of, and they are theſe that follow. Firſt, we may argue from the Intrinſick Matter

itſelf, and from the diſtinct Nature of theſe Offices, as ſome would repreſent them. If *Epiſcopacy* be a ſeparate Order, and really diſtinguiſhed from *Prieſthood* or *Presbytery*, then they can not be in the ſame Perſon. Whoſoever takes upon him the Epiſcopal Office, muſt lay down that of Presbyter, becauſe theſe two are incompatible in the ſame Man. And the Reaſon is this, becauſe, according to the Men we now contend with, they are *Diſtinct Orders*, and one is inconſiſtent with the other in the ſame Perſon: for one requires thoſe Performances which no ways agree with the other. It is here as it is in the *Prieſtly Order* and the *Deaconſhip*; when the former is aſſumed, the latter is caſt off; the Reaſon is becauſe theſe two are *Diſtinct Orders*, and they require *Diſtinct Actions*; therefore they are not to be conjoined at the ſame time in the ſame Perſon; though I know the contrary is generally held. But there is no Ground for it, as appears plainly from the *Nature* of the *Offices*. One is inferiour to the other, one is wholly ſubſervient to the other, ſo that it is impoſſible to act the Part of a *Deacon* and a *Presbyter* at once. The ſame is true concerning a *Biſhop* and a *Prieſt* (as ſome decypher them); they have contrary, yea contradictory Parts to act, they have Work to do which claſhes with itſelf.

In the next place, let me add this weighty Conſideration and Reaſon againſt the Pre-eminence of Biſhops above Presbyters, namely, that thoſe who aſſert this Pre-eminence, and an Inequality of Power in the Officers of the Church, do too much favour the *Roman* Cauſe, and relinquiſh the *Proteſtant* one. For when the Writers of the Church of *Rome* vindicate the Pope's Supremacy, and his Pre-eminence above all other Biſhops, thoſe of the *Reformed* Way oppoſe them, and diſtinguiſh between Supremacy of *Order* and of *Power*. That See is granted by them to have had the Firſt, but not the Second. And ſo it is not denied by them that the Apoſtle

Peter

Peter (from whom the pretended Supremacy of the *Roman* Biſhops is derived) was *firſt* in *order* among the Apoſtles, *Mat.* x. 2. *The firſt, Simon who is called Peter* (though by the Bye we may obſerve that he is placed after the other Apoſtles in 1 *Cor.* i. 12. ix. 5. 1 *Cor.* iii. 22.) But the Evangeliſts name him firſt becauſe he was the oldeſt, and becauſe he was the moſt zealous of the Apoſtles. And he generally was the *Spokeſman* for the reſt of the Apoſtles, he appeared at the Head of them, and acted the Part of *Moderator* in their Aſſemblies, *Mat.* xvi. 16. *John* vi. 68. *Acts* i. 15. *Acts* ii. 14. Thence by the *Greek* Fathers he was ſtiled ὁ κορυφαῖος, and κορυφαιότατος, and προεδρης, and *Princeps Apoſtolorum* by ſome of the *Latins*. Proteſtant Writers agree to this, and interpret it of the Primacy of *Order*, not of a Monarchick Preſidency, or a Primacy of *Power* and *Juriſdiction*. This they aſſert againſt the unjuſt Uſurpation of the Biſhops of *Rome*. And they declare it to be their Judgement that Primacy of *Order* doth not infer that of *Power*.

But why then do we not make uſe of this Diſtinction when we diſpute with thoſe of the Presbyterian Perſuaſion about Epiſcopacy? If the *Biſhop of Rome* is allowed only to have a Primacy of *Order*, how come the *Proteſtant Biſhops* to have a *Supremacy of Power* over the reſt of the Clergy? It can not be denied that there are ſeveral Texts in the Apoſtolick *Epiſtles* which countenance, nay I may ſay conſtitute the *Priority of Order* in ſome Miniſters of the Goſpel. They are to preſide, and to be Moderators over the reſt, when there is occaſion for it, for ſome one muſt ſpeak or act firſt. But we are not to underſtand this of *Power*, but of mere *Priority*; and it is illogical to argue from this latter to the former. We think it to be ſo when we engage in our Diſcourſes againſt the *Papiſts*; and therefore this ſhould be well conſidered by

thoſe that profeſs they diſown a Correſpondence with *Rome*, and disbelieve the Supremacy which the *Roman* Doctors derive from St. *Peter*. We talk and write very freely againſt the *Romaniſts* for their maintaining this Doctrine, we fiercely oppoſe St. *Peter*'s being advanced to a Power over the reſt of the Apoſtles. And how then can we at the ſame time allow of Biſhops aſſuming a peculiar Power and Juriſdiction over their Brethren of the Clergy? Can we think that St. *Peter* had no Supremacy of Power over the other Apoſtles, and yet that every Biſhop hath that Power over all Miniſters of the Church? Or, ſhall we blame the Church of *Rome* for maintaining the Sovereignty of one Man above all the reſt in the Church, and ſhall we at the ſame time aſſert and vindicate the Supereminent Power and Authority of Biſhops above all the other Spiritual Guides of the Church? Any one that ſeriouſly conſiders this, will pronounce us inconſiſtent with our ſelves, and ſay that we are not fair Diſputants, becauſe we manage the ſame Argument otherwiſe with the *Romaniſts* than with our Brethren of the *Proteſtant* Religion. Nay, we not only manage our Diſpute ill, but we for ever debar ourſelves of arguing againſt the Pope's Supremacy for the future; for we can't poſſibly maintain our Point againſt the Papiſts as to that, if we allow of Prelacy in Paſtors. If we hold Superiority of Power in the Miniſters of the Goſpel, we palpably join with the Church of *Rome*, and countenance St. *Peter*'s Primacy of Power which they talk of.

Nay, in the next Place, let it be conſidered, that in aſſerting Epiſcopacy in the modern Senſe and Acception of it, we go *beyond the Papiſts* themſelves; which, one would think, is not much for our Credit. *Biſhops* and *Prieſts* are the very ſame Order, ſay the Men of the Church of *Rome*: But *we* ſay they are two Diſtinct Orders. They hold that

that Epiſcopacy is only by Eccleſiaſtical Right; but our Churchmen contend that it is by divine Right. *Gratian*, the famous *Canoniſt*, and Compiler of the *Decrees*, hath theſe Words, * *We aſſert that Deaconſhip and Presbytery are two Sacred Orders; and they are the only ones that the Primitive Church is ſaid to have had.* Theſe are plain Words; but the Author of the *Gloſs on Gratian*, would bring him off thus, † "Some ſay, that in the "firſt Primitive Church the Office of Biſhops and "Presbyters was common, and the Names ſo too: "but in the ſecond Primitive Church both Names "and Offices began to be diſtinguiſhed". He is forced to have recourſe to *a Second Firſt* Church, to countenance what he ſaith, which doth but the more confirm *Gratian*'s Aſſertion, that in the Times which were truly Primitive and Apoſtolical *Biſhops* and *Presbyters* were the ſame Order. An other Great and Celebrated Canoniſt tells us peremptorily that § *Presbyters of old ruled the Church in common, and ordained Prieſts, and adminiſtered all the Sacraments.* And though he ſpeaks afterwards as if the Apoſtles appointed Biſhops in the Church, to prevent and allay Schiſms; yet that is but a faint Appendix to what he had before laid down ſo poſitively concerning the *Equality* of Rule in the Church. And it is not to be doubted that this was his ſettled Judgement, for a profeſſed Son of the Church of *Rome* complains of him for this, that ‡ he denied the Diſtinction between a Biſhop

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* Sacros ordines dicimus Diaconatum & Presbyteratum: hos quidem ſolos Eccleſia Primitiva habuiſſe dicitur. *Diſt.* 60. *c. mul. ex urb. Pap.*

† Diſt. 93. cap. legimus.

§ Olim Presbyteri in communi regebant Eccleſiam, & ordinabant Sacerdotes, & pariter conferebant omnia Sacramenta. *Panormitan. l.* 1. *Decretal. de Conſuetudine, cap* 4.

‡ Panormitanus in quæſtionibus ſuis, ex malâ interpretatione Hieronymi negat hanc divino jure inter Epiſcopos & Presbyteros diſtinctionem. *Franc. à Sanctâ Clarâ Apol. Epiſc. p.* 64.

and a Presbyter, therein following the Senſe of St. *Jerom.* It was a hot Diſpute afterwards in the Council of *Trent*, whether the Order of Biſhops was by Divine Right; and the *Italian* Biſhops were againſt it. * One of the moſt eminent of them hath told the World that *Jerom*, *Ambroſe*, *Auguſtine*, *Chryſoſtom*, *and ſeveral other Fathers held that Biſhops and Presbyters were the ſame in reſpect of the Power of their Order*; *and that was the Reaſon why Biſhops were called Presbyters*, *and Presbyters Biſhops.* It is well known that according to the Determination of the aforeſaid Council there are *Seven Orders* in the Church, namely, † Door-keeper, Reader, Exorciſt, Taper-bearer (called heretofore *Acolythus*), Subdeacon, Deacon, Prieſt: but there is no mention of *Archbishops* or *Bishops.* But if you ask of what *Order* theſe are, they tell you that they are *Prieſts* or *Presbyters*, and the Pope himſelf is but a *Prieſt*, though he is a *High* one. Their great Champion *Bellarmine* holds that Biſhops and Prieſts are but one Order; for his Words are theſe: § *Epiſcopacy without Prieſthood is not a ſuperior Order*, *but is indeed Nothing*, *a mere Fiction of the Mind.* Thus we ſee that no diſtinct Order of Biſhops is owned by the *Roman Councils* and *Doctors.* Yea, the general Doctrine of their *Schoolmen* is that Epiſcopacy is the ſame Order with Presbytery.

Let it not here be invidiouſly and perverſely objected, by way of Reproach, that I maintain the ſame Doctrine that the Popiſh Doctors have eſpouſed, as it is likely ſome may make uſe of what I have ſaid to ſuch a croſs purpoſe. If they do, they are to be told that the *Roman* Catholicks aſſert this Doctrine on quite an other foot than I do: For their Deſign in it is to advance the *Prieſthood*, on

* Medina de Sacror. homin. origin. lib. 5. c. 5.
† Catechiſm. Trident. pars 2,
§ De Sacrament. Ordin. cap. 5.

account

account of the *Prieſt*'s Power to turn the Bread into Chriſt's Body, and the Wine into Chriſt's Blood. There being this wonderful Power inherent in *prieſts*, *Biſhops* muſt not be above them *jure divino*, but only in Politick Conſideration. This is the true Reaſon why they make Biſhops and Presbyters the ſame Order. We ſee it is perfectly upon Deſign, and were there not ſuch a Deſign in their Heads, they would be of an other Opinion. But I don't plead for the Indentity or Equality of Biſhops and Presbyters on ſuch an account; and therefore it would be idly and fooliſhly objected that I hold with the *Papiſts*. There is no Man of unprejudiced Judgement will think the worſe of the Aſſertion, becauſe it is held by thoſe of the *Roman* Communion, when he conſiders that they hold it on a far different Account and Ground than I do. But thoſe of the Epiſcopal Perſuaſion have reaſon to think the worſe of their Doctrine, ſeeing it outgoes that of the very Papiſts in this Point: For theſe, with moſt *Proteſtants*, yea, and with many of the learnedeſt *Fathers*, aſſert, according to the Scriptures, that *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* are the ſame Order: But the others contend that they are really diſtinct, and under Pretence of a *Jus Divinum* ſet Biſhops over Presbyters.

There is an other Conſideration, which I will offer to the Reader in the laſt Place: Which though it doth not poſitively overthrow the Doctrine of Epiſcopacy, as it is held and maintained by ſome Men, yet it will be ſerviceable to take off the Rigour and Zeal which they expreſs in this Cauſe, and to make them calm and moderate, ſhy and wary in their Determinations about this Matter. So that though we gain them not to our Side, yet I hope we ſhall, for the Future, not find them ſo preremptory as they have been. I deſire them to conſider, that Things relating to Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, and particularly the Offices in the

Church, have not been very clearly delivered to us by the Antient Writers, but rather very obſcurely and doubtfully, and the Accounts which they have given us of them are Different, and ſometimes Contradictory: So that the Opinion of the Antient Fathers, and the Practice of the Chriſtian Churches, which theſe Men ſometimes ſo much rely upon, and appeal to in the preſent Cauſe, are little to be regarded. It was not fully agreed (as I hinted before) among ſome of the Antients, to whom the *Office of Preaching* appertained. *Optatus* Biſhop of *Milevi* hath told us, that none but Biſhops uſed to perform the Great Offices of Religion, and particularly This. We are informed by an other, *Poſidonius*, in the Life of St. *Auguſtine*, that in the *African* Churches the Biſhop only preached, that is, none other, either Deacon or Presbyter, was allowed to preach in his Preſence. Nay, whether any Biſhop was preſent or not, this Employment was in a Manner appropriated to that Rank of Churchmen in many Places. * *Sozomen* and † *Socrates* ſpeak of this Practice for ſome Time in the Churches of *Alexandria*. And from the whole it is evident, that there was ſome Diſagreement among the Antients, about the Perſon in whom this Office ſhould be fixed. Who then can with any Reaſon rely on the Judgement or Reports of the Antient Writers, about the Office of a *Biſhop*, or *Epiſcopacy* itſelf?

Next I will ſhew, that there was a great Diſſention about the Adminiſtring of *Baptiſm*, and conſequently about the Office of *Deacons* and *Prieſts*: And thence we may rationally gather, that the Office of *Biſhops* (which ſome Men ſeem to be ſo well skilled in) was uncertain. In many Places of the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions*, Deacons are forbid to baptize, and ſome of the *Fathers* will not allow

* Lib. 7. cap. 19. † Lib. 5. cap. 22.

them

them to baptize. But there are other Fathers that hold Baptizing to be a Work of *Deacons* as well as *Presbyters*, of which Opinion are *Tertullian*, *Cyrill of Jeruſalem*, *Jerom*, and others. And according to this Variety of Judgements, the Practice in the Church hath varied. In ſome Places, it was uſual for the Deacons to baptize, but in others they never did but when a Presbyter was not to be had, or when Neceſſity required.

There was likewiſe a Diſagreement about the Officer that was to adminiſter the *Lord's Supper*. Some of the Antients repreſent it as belonging only to the *Epiſcopal Order*, though the Biſhops might depute Presbyters and Deacons to exerciſe it; but the Right and Power was lodged in the Biſhops. It was uſual in ſome Churches, for the *Deacon* to diſtribute the Bread and Wine among the People, as *Juſtin Martyr* expreſsly teſtifies, *Apol.* 1. *cap.* 87. But at other Times this Practice was not allowed, the Deacons were not permitted to give the Bread, no nor the Wine to the People. This was the *Biſhop*'s Prerogative, as we learn from *Tertullian*. Thus they confounded the Office of *Biſhop*, *Presbyter*, and *Deacon*, and thereby let us know that they were not diſtinct Orders.

So, as to ſome Part of *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*, there was no Certainty about the Perſon who was to execute it. It appears from *Cyprian*'s Writings, that in the Church of *Africa*, when Penitents were ſick, and like to die, * *Deacons* took their Confeſſions, and gave them Abſolution, which is accounted the ſole Office of a *Prieſt*. The learned Biſhop that put forth the *Oxford Edition* of *Cyprian*'s

* Si incommodo aliquo & infirmitatis periculo occupati fuerint, non expectatâ præſentiâ noſtrâ, apud Presbyterum quemque præſentem, vel ſi Presbyter repertus non fuerit, & urgere exitus cœperit, apud Diaconum quoque exomologeſin facere delicti ſui poſſint. *Cypr.* Epiſt. 18.

Works,

Works, gives us this Annotation on that Paſſage, that it is on the Account of the Prieſtly Office that the Deacons took Confeſſions and Abſolved, but that we are to reckon it as a Thing Extraordinary, and done in Caſe of Neceſſity, namely, when there was no Biſhop or Presbyter to execute that Office. But this is but a Shift, and is looked upon as ſuch by others who have commented on that Paſſage; and particularly by *Rigaltius*, and by a late * Author, who aſſerts, that the *Sacerdotal Virtue* is contained even in *Deacons*. And he expreſsly tells us, that Deacons are not a Diſtinct Order from Presbyters or Prieſts, for *their Miniſtry is truly and properly Sacerdotal*, ſaith he: And he particularly inſtances in the Offices of *Offering up Prayers*, and *Adminiſtring the Sacrament*; and poſitively aſſerts, that theſe are the Acts and Offices of a *Prieſt*, and conſequently *Deacons* are Prieſts. See this enlarged upon in *pag.* 32, and 33. And yet this Writer, I ſuppoſe, holds with the Generality of our Church of *England* Men, that Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons are three diſtinct Orders. He hath lately got a Proſelyte, who tells us, † That *in the Adminiſtrations of Praying and Baptizing, the Characters of Prieſthood are viſible in Deacons, and theſe Perſons who thus officiate are Prieſts, and their Miniſtration is truly and properly Sacerdotal.* Is it not ſtrange that a Man ſhould thus confute and baffle himſelf? for ſo he doth: After he had aſſerted *Three* Orders of Miniſters in the Church, he drops one of them, for here we ſee he confounds the Diſtinction of *Prieſt* and *Deacon*.

We ſee, by what hath been ſaid, how Uncertain the Offices of Miniſters have been in the Antient Churches, and how Uncertain at preſent; ſo that

* Dr. *Hickes*'s Chriſtian Prieſthood aſſerted.
† Mr. *Bennet* of Joint-Prayer.

we cannot make a ſteady Judgement concerning them. If we proceed meerly according to Tradition and Practice in the Church, we cannot tell what properly belongs to *Deacons*, and what to *Presbyters*; and ſo it is no Wonder that the *Biſhop's Office* is alſo miſrepreſented. For if there was this Difference (as we have ſhewn) about the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, and concerning Confeſſion and Abſolution, without doubt there was as much Diſagreement about Epiſcopacy. Any rational and thinking Man will acknowledge this, and thence conclude, that it is impoſſible to determine certainly about it from the Judgement of the Fathers, or the Practice of ſome Churches; for theſe are either Obſcure and Doubtful, or elſe not of ſufficient Authority. And this the Learnedeſt Advocates for Epiſcopacy have confeſſed and owned. Yea, ſome of them have gone ſo far, as to acknowledge that the Epiſcopal Government, and the other Parts of the Hierarchy have no plain and certain Foundation in the Bible. *It is not eaſy to give a diſtinct and certain Account what were the particular Offices of* thoſe *Perſons who are mentioned in* Eph. iv. 11. He gave ſome Apoſtles, *&c. And which of them were Extraordinary and Temporary, and which deſigned for the conſtant and laſting Uſe of the Church, ſince the Scriptures do not ſpeak clearly, and learned Men have differed in their Judgements about them.* So ſaith a late * Author, in his Diſcourſe of *Church-Government*. And preſently after, † *A clear and diſtinct Account ought not to be expected of the Miniſters of this Age*, namely, the Age of the Apoſtles. And then how ſhould we expect a clear and diſtinct Account of the Miniſters and Eccleſiaſtical Officers in After-Ages? Thus this very learned Man throws all down that he deſigned to erect, that is, the Divine Authority of E-

* Chap. 3. p. 100. † Pag. 101.

piſcopacy

piſcopacy. And thus far we have our Adverſaries on our Side, that though they plead ſo fiercely for the Divine Right of Epiſcopal Government, yet they frankly confeſs that they are in the Dark, and know little of it: They tell us, that the Offices and Orders of Miniſters in the Chriſtian Church are obſcurely mentioned in the Writings of the Apoſtles, and that there is *no Certainty* about them. Now, though this be a Falſity, for the New Teſtament gives us a plain and perfect Account of the Matter before us, and lets us know (as I have ſhewed) that Biſhop and Presbyter are no Diſtinct Orders, yet it is a good and valid Argument againſt thoſe that are rigid Aſſerters of the Divine Inſtitution of Epiſcopacy; for why do they fight in the Dark? Why do they furiouſly contend for that, which they themſelves own is neither clearly and certainly delivered in Scripture, nor agreed upon by learned Men?

I could here obſerve, that ſome of the Chief Aſſerters of modern Epiſcopacy betray the Cauſe, and by the over-ruling Power of Truth, confute what at other Times they contend for. The great Oracle of the High-Fliers confeſſes *, that there is no mention of Biſhops in either Epiſtles to the *Theſſalonians*, becauſe theſe Officers were not at that Time in the Church, *Anno Chriſti* 49, or 51. In an other Place he ſaith, † *During the firſt Times of the Apoſtles, they did, for a while, forbear the Setting any Biſhop up in any conſiderable Superiority over his Brethren. For a while they exerciſed no Government at all*, p. 250. He adds, that *the Chriſtians allowed their firſt Presbyters no more Pre-eminence than what was allowed to the Archi-ſynagogus*, p. 251. And he acknowledges, that *none underſtood*

* Mr. *Dodwell*, De Jure Laic. *p.* 232.
† Diſcourſe of One Altar and One Prieſthood. *p.* 248.

that

that Office to be with the leaſt Deſign of Emulation againſt the High-Prieſt. And yet he labours to prove, that Epiſcopacy ſucceeded and anſwered to the High-Prieſt's Office. Thus I think it is evident, that this learned Gentleman baffles himſelf and his Cauſe.

CHAP. IX.

HAVING thus eſtabliſhed the Point I undertook to make good, it will be requiſite to conſider the Arguments which are made uſe of on the other Side, and to ſhew the Invalidity of them. Their firſt great Argument is taken from Scripture, that is, from what is ſaid there concerning *Timothy* and *Titus*. From what theſe two Perſons did in the Church, they would infer, that they were *Biſhops* diſtinct from *Presbyters*. *Timothy* could not but be the *Biſhop* of *Epheſus*, even in the lateſt Acception of that Title, becauſe we read that he is bid to take Care of the Clergy, to *charge them to teach no other Doctrine* than what he allowed of 1 *Tim.* i. 3. and not only to tell them what they are to preach, and what they are to do, but to command them; 1 *Tim.* iv. 11. *Theſe Things command and teach.* He was to ſee that Biſhops and Deacons were rightly qualified, *a Biſhop muſt be blameleſs*, &c. 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. *Let the Deacons be the Husbands of one Wife*, &c. Ver. 12. He was to look to the Maintenance of the Elders of both Sorts, that they *be counted worthy of double Honour*, 1 *Tim.* v. 17. He was to reprove and check the diſorderly Clergy, and uſe the Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures towards them: *Them that ſin, rebuke before all, that others alſo may fear*, 1 Tim. v. 10. He was alſo to ordain Miniſters, 1 *Tim.* v. 22. for there he is authorized *to lay Hands*, though *not ſuddenly*

ſuddenly and unadviſedly, upon them. Now, he that could do all theſe Things, was no leſs than a *Biſhop*, as that Title is diſtinguiſhed from that of *Presbyter*. In ſhort, he had an Eccleſiaſtical Power and Juriſdiction over other Presbyters; therefore he was properly a *Biſhop*.

The brief Anſwer to all which is this, that from *Timothy*'s Exerciſing the Power of Cenſuring, Commanding, Ordaining, Ruling, *&c.* it doth not follow, that he was of an Order diſtinct from Presbyters. For I have proved before, that theſe Exertments of Miniſterial Power belong to all Presbyters, as ſuch. It is needleſs therefore to inſiſt upon this any longer, ſeeing the *Objection* is anſwered by what I have ſaid already. And as for St. *Paul*'s authorizing *Timothy* to exert a Power over other Presbyters, it is to be underſtood of *Timothy*'s doing it not by himſelf alone, but in Conjunction with the reſt of the Presbyters. They were *All* to ſtir up and provoke one an other to the Diſcharge of the Miniſterial Office. So that when St. *Paul* calls upon *Timothy* to perform thoſe ſeveral things aforeſaid, he at the ſame time calls upon all *the Presbyters* to join with him in the doing of them. We learn this from comparing 2 *Tim.* i. 6. with 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. for in the former Place it is ſaid, that *Timothy* was ſet a-part to the Miniſtry, *by the Putting on of St.* Paul's *Hands*; and in the Latter we read, that *Timothy* was ordained *by the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*. That is ſaid in one Place to be done by St. *Paul*, which in an other is plainly ſaid to be done not only by St. *Paul*, but by *Others*. This clears the Matter which is before us: And therefore I infer, that theſe Things which have been mentioned out of the Firſt and Second Epiſtle to *Timothy*, were ſuch as either *Timothy* might perform himſelf, as a ſingle Paſtor, (he conſulting the Welfare of his Brethren-Presbyters, as well as of the Flock)

Flock) or elſe ſuch as were tranſacted by the whole Presbytery, as *Ordaining*, &c. And yet the Injunctions are directed to one Perſon, that is, *Timothy*, becauſe he was a Principal One, and was therefore to exhort and call upon the Reſt. So every one of the *Epiſtles to the Churches* in St *John's* Book of the *Revelation*, is directed to *one*. who is called the *Angel of the Church*, but they were intended for the whole Body of the Church. It cannot then be gathered from St. *Paul's* particular Directing his Advice to *Timothy*, that he *only* was to perform thoſe authoritative Acts of Diſcipline in the Church. No; St. *Paul* had a great Confidence in this Perſon, and therefore appointed him to be earneſt with the reſt to diſcharge theſe Eccleſiaſtical Offices, and do them with an entire Concurrence, and not to let any one ingroſs the whole to himſelf, and ſet himſelf up above the other Presbyters, ſeeing they are all Equal. Which I take to be the Meaning of 1 *Tim.* v. 21, where the Apoſtle moſt ſolemnly *charges Timothy*, that *he obſerve theſe Things, without preferring one before an other, doing nothing by Partiality.*

But the chief Place alledged for the Superiority of Biſhops above Presbyters, is that in 1 *Tim.* v. 19. whence the Patrons of Modern Epiſcopacy would prove that *Timothy* kept an Eccleſiaſtical Court, and received Accuſations and Preſentments, and examined Witneſſes; for it is ſaid, *Againſt an Elder receive not an Accuſation but before two or three Witneſſes:* Therefore *Timothy* was a Judge, and Presbyters were brought before him, and conſequently he was Superiour to them. Some have anſwered this by ſaying, that this is a Miſunderſtanding of the Word πρεσβύτερος here, which ſignifies not an Officer of the Church, but an *Elder* in reſpect of *Age*, as may be gathered from the Beginning of the Chapter, where an *Elder* is taken in that Senſe, as I have already remarked. But

becauſe

becauſe there may be ſome Diſpute about this, and it may not be fully ſatisfactory to ſome to argue from the Acception of the Word in one Part of the Chapter, to its Acception in an other, I will wave this Anſwer, and offer an other, which I hope will give Satisfaction to the Reader. The Superiority of Biſhops above Presbyters cannot be inferred from this Text, becauſe we are to underſtand this *receiving of Accuſations* and taking the Depoſition of *Witneſſes*, as done by the *whole Presbytery*, or Body of *Presbyters*; though the Apoſtle's Direction here is to *Timothy*, who was one of the Presbyters of *Epheſus* whom the Apoſtle confided moſt in: And therefore he conſtituted him the Preſident or Chairman of the Conſiſtory at that Time. But it follows not thence, that he was *Superiour* to the other Presbyters, as to *Juriſdiction* and *Power*, and that he was of an *Order diſtinct* from them. We ſee that the *Juſtices of the Peace*, at their Seſſions, take the Chair by Turns: One is a Speaker and Director at one time, and an other at an other, but all the Juſtices have the ſame Power as Juſtices: There is no diſtinct Office or Order made by this. So it was in the Society of the Presbyters, in the Times of the Apoſtles: They were all Equal as to their Great Office of the Miniſtry; but when there was an Aſſembly of them, one was choſen to be the Head-Man or Chief Presbyter, who for that Time preſided over the Reſt, who were Inferiour to the Preſiding Presbyter all the time of his Preſidentſhip. But this doth not prove that he was always Superiour to the Reſt, and that he was of a diſtinct Order from them.

Having diſmiſſed the groundleſs Inference made from the fore-cited Text, I will now make it evident from the Sacred Records, that *Timothy* was no *Biſhop*, as the Patrons of the Church-Hierarchy underſtand that Term. He could not be one of this Character, becauſe he was not fixed in any City

City or Province, as a *Biſhop* ſhould be, but was ſent from Place to Place. He was employed by St. *Paul* to go and viſit ſeveral Churches. Accordingly we find him ſometimes at *Epheſus*, Acts xviii. 5; ſometimes at *Rome*, as when St. *Paul* writ his Second Epiſtle to him. Sometimes he is ſent to *Theſſalonica*, 1 Theſſ. iii. 2. He is at *Berea*, Acts xvii. 14. at *Corinth*, 1 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Cor. xvi. 10. at *Macedonia*, Acts xix. 22. at *Troas*, Acts xx. 5, 6. at *Miletus*, ver. 17. where St. *Paul* ſends for the Presbyters of *Epheſus*, and exhorts them to take heed to themſelves, and the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt had made them Overſeers; but he hath not one Syllable about *Timothy*, who is pretended to be their *Overſeer*, or *Biſhop*. And yet at this Time, if ever, *Timothy* was their Biſhop. Theſe Journies and Removals ſhew, that *Timothy* was not fixed to a Place or Dioceſs, and was no ſettled Officer in any Church. And that theſe Journies were after *Timothy* was ſent by St. *Paul* to *Epheſus*, is evident; for it was after the Apoſtle's Writing of his firſt Epiſtle to him, that he was with him at *Miletus*, as appears from his being a Fellow-Priſoner with the Apoſtle at *Rome*, Heb. xiii. 23. Col. i. 1. And afterwards St. *Paul* ſent for *Timothy* from *Rome*, not from *Epheſus*, 2 Tim. iv. 6, *&c.* This ſhews he was no *Biſhop*, that is, he was not the ſingular and ſpecial Overſeer of *Epheſus*, but accordingly as the Apoſtle commiſſioned him, he was ſent to ſeveral Churches, to take Care of them, and promote the Goſpel among them. You may call him, if you pleaſe, an *Itinerary Biſhop*; but it is certain he was not ſuch a Biſhop as the Epiſcopal Writers contend for, and would perſuade us he was. Biſhop *Pearſon* obſerves, that *Paul* writ his Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy* *A. D.* 65. and two Years after this, he ſent for him to *Rome*, 2 Tim. iv. 9, 21. and there he continued 'till St. *Paul*'s Death. How this conſiſts with

what hath been ſaid before, I ſhall not now enquire, but from the whole it is very plain, that *Timothy* did not reſide at *Epheſus*, and conſequently was no ſettled Officer in the Church, (as a Biſhop ought to be) and, in a Word, was no Biſhop.

Then, as for St. *Paul's Epiſtle to Titus*, it is alledged, that there is ſufficient Proof of the Superiority of Biſhops above Presbyters in thoſe Writings; for firſt, *Titus* hath Authority *to ſet in Order the Things that were wanting* in the Churches of *Crete*, Tit. i. 5. But ſo might any or all the Presbyters there have been ordered to do the like: Only *Titus*, whom St. *Paul* could confide in more than in any other, was ſent thither to promote this great Deſign, and to ſtir up the ſeveral Paſtors to do their Work effectually. Again, it is alledged out of this Epiſtle, that *Titus* had Power *to Ordain Elders in every City*, Tit. i. 5. therefore he was a Biſhop. But I have ſhewed before, that there is no Conſequence in this, for Ordination doth not infer Epiſcopacy. Others might have performed this Task, as well as *Titus*, if the Apoſtle had pleaſed to order it; for the Power of Ordaining was common to the whole Presbytery. It is again ſaid, that *Titus* had Warrant to *ſtop the Mouths of unruly and vain Talkers and Deceivers*, Tit. i. 11. But this was incumbent on any Paſtor of the Churches of *Crete*. And beſides, the Words are theſe, *Their Mouths muſt be ſtopped*; but it is not ſaid that *Titus* is to do it, it may be meant of the whole Body of Presbyters. But it is further ſaid to *Titus*, *Rebuke with all Authority*, Chap. ii. ver. 15. What then? Every Presbyter had Power to do this, yea, if there were Occaſion, he was obliged to do it. But *Titus* is commiſſioned to admoniſh, and to puniſh Hereticks, which argues Epiſcopal Authority; *A Man that is an Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, reject*, Tit. iii. 10. Here ſome dream of a Form of an *Eccleſiaſtical Court*, to which Offenders

Offenders are ſummoned, and being found guilty and refractory, they are Excommunicated and caſt out of the Church; which is a plain Argument of Prelatical Juriſdiction. No ſuch Thing; for the *Presbytery* being met together could do all this, and without doubt they did. You may call this an Eccleſiaſtical Court, if you will; but you can't thence infer, that he that cauſed it to be held, was a *Biſhop*, or that the holding of ſuch a Court is a Proof of Epiſcopacy, and particularly of *Titus*'s Epiſcopal Power. For theſe Acts of Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction and Authority do not argue a Superiority of any diſtinct Order from that of Presbyters. *Titus*, as he was a bare Paſtor, might exerciſe this and all the other Acts of Diſcipline and Government. And after all, this may be ſaid with Truth and Reaſon, that Actions are attributed to the Preſiding Presbyter, as if they were *his only*, becauſe he was the Chief Director in thoſe Actions. This one Conſideration (if there were no other) is enough to decide the whole Controverſy.

But if we would have a true Character of *Titus*, it is this; he (as well as *Timothy*) was St. *Paul*'s *Deputy* or *Agent* in thoſe Churches where the Apoſtle was concerned. He, as *Timothy*, went from Place to Place, according to the Apoſtle's Pleaſure: Thus it is recorded, that when he had, according to St. *Paul*'s Directions, *ordained Elders in every City*, and *ſet in order the Things that were wanting*, he reſided no longer in *Crete*, but came away thence after he had been there a Year, and no more; for we read that then St. *Paul* ſent to him to come to *Nicopolis*, Tit. iii. 12. Afterwards he was ſent to *Corinth*, from whence he was expected at *Troas*, 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13. and he came to St. *Paul* at *Macedonia*, 2 Cor. vii. 6. and then he had a Commiſſion to return to *Corinth*, 2 Cor. viii. 6. Then we find him at *Rome*, and afterwards at *Dalmatia*, 2 Tim. iv. 10. Thus it is plain that he was *not a*

Biſhop, as the Word is taken in the late Senſe of it, for he was not of any certain Place or City, but was the Apoſtle's Miniſter and Agent in ſeveral Places, and particularly in *Crete*, which is meant by the Apoſtle's *Leaving him in Crete*; not that he conſtituted him the Biſhop of the Place, or of any City there, but that he made him an Overſeer there for a Time, and on that preſent Emergency.

To conclude, we cannot argue from the Directions given by the Apoſtle to *Timothy* and *Titus*, in the fore-cited Epiſtles, that they were *Biſhops*; for indeed ſome of this Kind of Directions (as *Warn them that are unruly*, &c.) occur in the Epiſtles to the *Theſſalonians*, and yet all is ſpoken to the *Brethren* only; for at that Time it is confeſſed, (as we have heard) that there were no ſettled Officers in the Church, and particularly no Biſhops. But this, and only this can be gathered from the foregoing Paſſages in the Epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, that theſe Perſons were *Evangeliſts*; and ſo indeed the Former of them is expreſsly called, 2 *Tim.* iv. 5. and from what we read concerning both of them, it may be concluded, that *that* was their proper Character, for they were ſent from Place to Place to preach the Goſpel, and look after the Affairs of the Churches, but they reſided not in any Place: Which ſhews that they were no *Biſhops*. *Timothy* was diſpatched to *Epheſus*, and ſeveral other Places, and *Titus* to *Crete*, and ſeveral other Countries, there to do the Work of *Evangeliſts*, that is, to preach and Convert, and to ſettle Church-Affairs, and to ſet Paſtors over the Churches: But they themſelves were no ſettled and ſtated Paſtors or Overſeers of thoſe Churches of *Epheſus* and *Crete*. Wherefore thoſe Writers abuſe their Readers, and mightily impoſe upon them, who pretend to prove Prelacy from thoſe fore-named Texts. Upon which Account a Writer of our own Church is much to be commended; for after he had particularly reckoned

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up what is ſaid concerning *Timothy* and *Titus*, out of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles to them *, he ingenuouſly confeſſes, that *theſe two Inſtances abſolutely taken, afford us no convincing Arguments for a ſettled Dioceſan Epiſcopacy.*

* Dr. *Whitby*'s Preface to the Epiſtle to *Titus*.

CHAP. X.

AN other Argument, much made uſe of by our Opponents, is drawn from the *Succeſſion of Biſhops* in the Apoſtle's Times, and ſoon after. They pretend that they can ſhew, out of very authentick and credible Authors, how Biſhops, as diſtinct from Presbyters, were ſucceſſively placed in the ſeveral eminent Churches in the Firſt Times. They tell us, that *Biſhops* were conſtituted by the Apoſtles themſelves to ſucceed them in great Cities, as not only *Timothy* at *Epheſus*, and *Titus* in *Crete*, but *James* at *Jeruſalem*, *Linus* or *Clement* at *Rome*, *Mark* at *Alexandria*, *Ignatius* at *Antioch*, *Polycarp* at *Smyna*. What can be more plain and convincing, ſay the Champions of Prelacy, than this Appointing of ſingle Perſons to govern thoſe reſpective Churches? I anſwer, the firſt Branch of this Succeſſion is enervated, by what hath been delivered already; for I have ſhewed, that neither *Timothy* nor *Titus* were Biſhops of *Epheſus* and *Crete*, that is, they were not Superiour in Power and Juriſdiction to the other Presbyters in thoſe Places, but were only ſent as Directors to them, and jointly acted with them in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs. It is true, ſome eminent Writers of the Church, as *Euſebius*, *Jerom*, *Chryſoſtom*, and *Theodoret*, relate that *Timothy* was thought to be the Firſt that exerciſed Epiſcopal Authority over the

Churches of *Epheſus*, and *Titus* was the firſt Biſhop of *Crete*; but that learned Writer, whom I laſt quoted, declares, * That *he can find nothing in any Writers of the firſt three Centuries, to prove that Timothy was made Biſhop of Epheſus, and Titus of Crete, and that he can find no Intimation that they bore that Name.* But if he could have found it in any of thoſe Antient Writers, it would ſignify nothing to the Purpoſe of our Epiſcoparians; for their Meaning could be no more than this, (as appears from their way of expreſſing themſelves) that *Timothy* and *Titus* were entruſted with the Care of thoſe Churches of *Epheſus* and *Crete*, and were the Chief Paſtors in thoſe Places: Which proves not that *Superiority* or *ſingle Juriſdiction* and *Power* which are in Diſpute. They were ſent by the Apoſtle to *other Churches* as well as to theſe: And you may as well ſay, they were Biſhops of all thoſe Churches, as you can affirm, that they were Biſhops of theſe.

As for the ſecond Inſtance, that of St. *James* at *Jeruſalem:* I grant that ſeveral Writers of the Church, *Cyrill*, *Jerom*, *Auguſtine*, *Epiphanius*, *Ambroſe*, mention him as the Firſt Biſhop of that Place. Yea, Dr. *Hammond* advances him higher, and thinks that *he that ſits on the Throne, with the four and twenty Elders about him*, Rev. iv. 3, 4. hath Reference to *James* Archbiſhop of *Jeruſalem*, in Council with the four and twenty Biſhops of *Judea*. A little more Fancy would have made him apply it to one of our Archbiſhops, and the four and twenty Lord Biſhops of our Church, for that is the juſt Number of them with us; but no Man ever before dreamt of that Number in *Judea*. And truly it is but a Dream, that St. *James* was either Archbiſhop or Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, as I will make appear from two plain Paſſages in the *Acts* of the

* Pref. to the Epiſtle to *Titus*.

Apoſtles,

Apoſtles. The firſt is *Acts* xi. 29, 30. *The Diſciples, every Man according to his Ability, determined to ſend Relief to the Brethren that dwelt at Judea: which alſo they did, and ſent it to the Elders by the Hands of Barnabas and Saul.* Where we ſee that the Chriſtians of *Antioch* ſend their Relief to the Overſeers and Miniſters of the Church at *Jeruſalem*, who are called *Presbyters* or *Elders*; whereas if St. *James* had been *ſole Overſeer* and *Biſhop* there, as is pretended, they would have ſent their Relief to him, to be diſpoſed of by him, as being above the other Clergymen, and therefore to be taken notice of *before* them, or at leaſt *with* them. But the *Antiochian* Chriſtians knew of no ſuch Officer in that Church, and therefore ſent to the *Presbytery*, the College of Elders, who adminiſtered the Affairs of that Church.

The Second Paſſage is that in *Acts* xv. 2. *They determined that Paul and Barnabas ſhould go up to Jeruſalem unto the Apoſtles and Presbyters about that Queſtion*, namely the Controverſy about Circumciſion, and ſuch like Obſervances. And ſo, verſe 6. *The Apoſtles and Elders came together to conſider of this Matter.* And twice afterwards the *Apoſtles* and *Elders* are joined together: but there is no mention at all of a *Single Biſhop* of that Place. We are told here, and in verſe 22. that That firſt and famous Council at *Jeruſalem* conſiſted of *Apoſtles* and *Elders*, and the *whole Church*, or the *Brethren*, as they are called, verſe 23. and theſe tranſacted the whole Affair that was before them at that time. But where is the *Epiſcopacy* of St, *James* that ſome talk of? If he were Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, why is he not particularly mentioned as the chief Decider of the Caſe? Nay, why are the *Presbyters* and *Brethren* expreſsly mentioned, and his Name left out? If he had been the Biſhop of *Jeruſalem* in the modern Senſe, certainly he would have been taken notice of as ſuch, and his Superiority above the

Presbytery ſome ways ſignified to us. But there is no ſuch thing, the Debate at that Council was carried on by St. *Peter*, and by *Barnabas* and *Paul*, as well as by St. *James*; yea, the Matter was diſputed and canvaſſed by all the *Elders*. So that it is evident hence that St. *James* was not *Biſhop* of *Jeruſalem*, but acted in common with the College of Presbyters or Elders in that Church. And this might be farther proved from that Paſſage in *Heb.* xiii. 17, which I had occaſion to mention before, *Obey them that have the Rule over you*; to which add what is ſaid, verſe 24. *Salute all them that have the Rule over you:* Whence it is plain that there was no Single Church-Ruler in the Church of *Jeruſalem* when St. *Paul* writ to the *Jews*. That Church was ruled by a Presbytery or a College of Elders, of which *James* was one. Wherefore we may reaſonably infer that when this *James* is called by the Antients the *firſt Biſhop of Jeruſalem*, they underſtand by it no more than this, that he was an *Eminent Presbyter* there, and with other Presbyters was by the Apoſtles ſet over the Church of the Faithful in *Jeruſalem:* or if they meant more than this, they were miſtaken.

The Third Inſtance is of *Linus* or *Clement* at *Rome*, who are by the Antients ſaid to have been Succeſſors of the Apoſtle St. *Peter* in that Church. But this makes nothing for the Patrons of Epiſcopacy; for when it is ſaid that *Clemens* and *Linus* were *Biſhops of Rome*, no more is meant but that they were employed by the Apoſtles in regulateing the Churches of Chriſtians at *Rome*; not as if they were properly Biſhops in our uſual acception, but they were appointed by St. *Paul* and St. *Peter* to take care of Eccleſiaſtick Matters in that Place. I ſay, by St. *Paul* and St. *Peter*; for it is acknowledged by *Irenæus* and other Antient Fathers that *both theſe* had Churches at *Rome*. From which very thing we may learn what was the Epiſcopacy

of

of thoſe Days; St. *Paul* was the Inſtructer and Governour of the Church of the Converted *Gentiles*, and *St. Peter* of that of the converted *Jews*. And theſe were ſucceeded by *Linus* and *Clement*, the one the Overſeer of the *Gentile* Chriſtians, the other of the *Jewiſh* in that Place. Whence it appears that theſe two, who were Succeſſors of thoſe Apoſtles in *Rome*, were *Joint-Paſtors* of the Chriſtians there, and that is all. They could not be *Biſhops* (as we now underſtand that Term) becauſe there can be but one Biſhop in a Place. They were no more than *Preſbyters*; and it is probable that there were others of the ſame Character in that ſpatious City at that Time, who ruled the Churches in common, but *Clement* and *Linus* were the moſt Eminent among them. Here then is no Epiſcopacy; here is not one ſingle Perſon preſiding over all the reſt of his Brethren.

But before I leave this Inſtance, I will take notice how the *Fathers of the Church* diſagree about the Succeſſion of theſe two Perſons *Linus* and *Clement*. *Irenæus* in his 3d Book, Chap. 3. tells us that *Linus* was the firſt Biſhop of *Rome* after St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, and that the next was *Anacletus*, and after him *Clemens*. But *Euſebius* in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, Book 3. Chap. 4. relates that *Linus* was made Biſhop of *Rome* next after *Peter*, and *Clemens* immediately ſucceeded him. But *Clemens* was the next that ſucceeded the Apoſtle *Peter*, ſaith *Tertullian* in his Preſcriptions, chap. 32. We are told by *Epiphanius*, Hæreſ. 7. and 27. that at firſt *Peter* and *Paul* were Biſhops of *Rome*; but there is great Difficulty concerning their next Succeſſors, *Linus*, *Cletus*, *Clemens*. So that there is no truſting to the Fathers as to what they relate about the lineal Succeſſion of Biſhops. As the *Jewiſh* Writers are groſsly miſtaken in many things done amongſt the *Jews* (as hath been ſhewed by ſome Learned Men of late) ſo ſome of the Chriſtian Writers of the firſt Times report

report Things very differently from what really they were. Even the Things done in their own Times, or but a little while before, are miſrepreſented by them. Wherefore we have reaſon to reject their Teſtimony in ſeveral Things.

An other Branch of the Epiſcopal Succeſſion is ſaid to be that of St. *Mark* at *Alexandria:* But the ſame Anſwer is to be given here as before. St. *Mark* is called Biſhop of *Alexandria* only becauſe he was ſent thither by St. *Peter* to be one of their Miniſters or Paſtors, and proved a very eminent one. But it appears not that he was a Dioceſan Biſhop, or of a Diſtinct Order from Presbyters. Nay, it is *uncertain* whether he was the Firſt Paſtor of *Alexandria*; for all that *Euſebius* in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, book 2. chap. 18. ſaith of it is, that *it is ſaid* it was ſo.

An other Inſtance of the Succeſſion of Biſhops is ſaid to be that of *Ignatius* at *Antioch*, who is reported to have been the firſt Biſhop there. But the Truth of the Matter is this; There were two Apoſtles that were Co-founders of the Church of *Antioch:* St. *Peter* preſided over the *Jewiſh* Converts, and St. *Paul* over the *Gentile* Chriſtians (as it was at *Rome*, as hath been ſaid before). When theſe left *Antioch*, and went to reſide with the *Roman* Churches, they conſtituted *Euodius* and *Ignatius* Paſtors in their room; the former ſucceeding St. *Peter*, the latter St. *Paul.* Now, he is a very bold Man that will undertake to prove that theſe were *Dioceſan Biſhops*, when it is known and confeſſed that there can be but one at a time in a Place. The Truth is, they were ſuch Biſhops as *Eraſtus* was, whom St. *Paul* ſent with *Timothy* to *Macedonia*, Acts xix. 22. and as *Epaphroditus* was, who was Chief Miniſter of the *Philippians*, Phil. ii. 25, *&c.*

Likewiſe *Polycarp* Biſhop of *Smyrna* is reckoned among the Biſhops that were conſtituted by the Apoſtles

Apoſtles in the Primitive Churches. But all that is in it is this, that *Polycarp* was a Chief Presbyter there, but not of a diſtinct Order from the reſt of the Presbyters. And accordingly in his *Epiſtle* to the *Philippians* he bids them * be *obedient to the Presbyters and Deacons*, which lets us know that there were but two Orders in that Church. Thus we ſee Epiſcopacy cannot be founded on any of thoſe Inſtances of *Succeſſion* that have been produced.

But beſides theſe in the Apoſtle's Times, there was a Succeſſion of others ſoon afterwards, which are ſaid by the Antients to be *Biſhops*. Thus in *Jeruſalem* St. *James* was ſucceeded by *Symeon*, *Juſtus*, *Zacheus*, *Tobias*, *Benjamin*, *John*, *Matthias*. At *Rome*, *Peter* and *Linus* and *Clement* were ſucceeded by *Euareſtus*, *Alexander*, *Xyſtus* or *Sixtus*, *Teleſphorus*, *Hyginus*, *Pius*, &c. In *Alexandria*, *Mark* the Evangeliſt was followed by *Ananias*, *Avilius*, *Cerdo*, *Primus*, *Juſtus*, *Eumenes*, &c. In *Antioch* were theſe Biſhops after *Ignatius*, namely, *Heron*, *Cornelius*, *Eros*, *Theophilus*, &c. In *Bizantium* (afterwards *Conſtantinople*) the Succeſſors of *Andrew* the Apoſtle were *Stachys*, *Oneſimus*, *Polycarp*, *Plutarch*, *Sedecio*, *Diogenes*, &c. The Catalogue of theſe Biſhops is extant in the Writings of the Fathers, and why then ſhould any Man diſpute the Truth of the Thing? I anſwer in the Words of *Euſebius*, the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian, book 3. chap. 4. who ſaith he hath no other Foundation than the *Acts of the Apoſtles* and *St. Paul's Epiſtles* for what he delivers concerning *the Biſhops of ſeveral Churches*, who were ſet over them by the Apoſtles. This beſt of Church-Hiſtorians confeſſes this four hundred Years after the Apoſtles: Than which nothing can be more conſiderable in this Matter; for he made it his *Buſineſs* to acquaint

* Ὑποτασσομένους τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ τοῖς διακόνοις.

himſelf

himſelf with the Tranſactions of the foregoing Centuries of Chriſtianity; and yet he acknowledges that there is no depending upon *Tradition* concerning the *Succeſſion* of Biſhops. This therefore cannot be urged as any Argument in the preſent Caſe.

And beſides, they are the Apoſtles Times *chiefly*, not the ſucceeding ones at any conſiderable diſtance from them, that I have recourſe to in this Controverſy. For I grant (with *Theodore Beza*, *Peter de Moulin*, *Chamier*, *Vedelius*, *Salmaſius*, *Blondel*, and other Learned Defenders of Presbytery) that the Superiority of Biſhops over Presbyters was introduced into ſome Churches not long after the Apoſtles Times, namely in ſome Places in the Second Century, and in others in the Third. Wherefore the *Catalogue of Biſhops* fetched thence is nothing to the purpoſe of thoſe Perſons that produce it, becauſe they can not thereby prove that Biſhops were a diſtinct Order from Presbyters in the *Apoſtolical Times*.

CHAP. XI.

BUT from the Argument of *Succeſſion* they proceed to that of *Teſtimony*; and nothing is more warmly preſſed by them than what the Epiſtles of the good Biſhop of *Antioch*, *Ignatius*, furniſh them with. Theſe, they ſay, are expreſs for the Three diſtinct Orders of *Biſhops*, *Prieſts* or *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*; and therefore we have reaſon to believe that the Inequality of Biſhops and Presbyters was Primitive and Apoſtolical, ſeeing this Pious Writer lived ſo near the Apoſtles Times. To which I anſwer,

Firſt, Theſe Epiſtles, which ſo often mention *Biſhops*, *Prieſts*, and *Deacons*, are much to be ſuſpected.

pected. For though it is not denied that there is ſufficient Teſtimony in the* *Fathers* that there were antiently ſuch Writings as *Ignatius's Epiſtles*, yet there is good reaſon to think that they have been interpolated and corrupted. This is freely confeſſed by *Nicephorus* the Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, by *Anaſtaſius* the *Roman* Library-keeper mentioned by Archbiſhop *Uſher* on this occaſion, by *Mæſtræus* in his Preface to his Notes on *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles, and by the Great *Bellarmine* himſelf in his 4th Book of the Sacrament of the Euchariſt, chap. 26. Our Learned *Uſher* in his *Diſſertation* on theſe *Epiſtles*, chap. 4. owns that they have been depraved and altered from their Primitive Form, and he particularly ſhews what Interpolations have been made. The Author of them is ſo *laviſh* in his extolling of Biſhops, that That very Thing is ſufficient to convince any conſidering Man that they are Counterfeit, and that they were framed on purpoſe to defend the Cauſe of the Hierarchy. Thoſe fulſome Encomiums of Epiſcopacy do not ſavour of the Primitive Language, and the Simplicity of the Chriſtian Church; nor can they be thought worthy of that Man of God, to whom they are aſcribed. *Be ſubject to the Biſhop, as Jeſus Chriſt to the Father. Be ſubject to the Biſhop as to the Grace of God. Obey your Biſhop as you would obey Chriſt.* He (that is Solomon) *ſaith*, "*My Son, honour God and the* "*King*", *but I ſay, Honour God and the Biſhop as High Prieſt, according to his prieſting, and after him honour the King.* He corrects *Solomon*, that *Biſhops* may have the Preference to *Crowned Heads*, as well as to Presbyters. Whereupon the Judicious Archbiſhop *Uſher*, in his foreſaid *Diſſertation*, chap. 10. concludes that the *Ignatian* Epiſtles are corrupted, and particularly he infers it from this *Hyperbolical*

* Irenæus adv. hæreſ. l. Hieronym. de Script. Eccleſ. Origen. Homil. 6. in Luc. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. cap. 7. Theodoret. Dialog. 1.

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Amplification of the Epiſcopal Power, and the comparing it with (yea the extolling it above) *the Regal Dignity.* Such high-flown Notions as theſe never came from the Pen of that Holy and Humble Martyr. Such extravagant Heights, and ſo often repeated and urged, ſhew that it was Deſign and Fraud, merely to maintain and ſupport the Superiority of Biſhops over Presbyters, that was at that time on foot when the Epiſtles were writ, which it is probable was a conſiderable Time after the Date which theſe Writings bear. It is plain that they were contrived to magnify Prelacy, and that Men might have as high an Eſteem of *Biſhops* as of our *Lord Chriſt*, and that they ſhould equal one with the other.

And upon other accounts likewiſe, which are chiefly *Critical*, as the *Stile* of the Writer, *&c.* it is moſt probable that theſe Epiſtles were ſpurious, that is, they were not writ by *Ignatius*, but by ſome body afterwards, who fixed *his* Name to them. Dr. *Hammond* and Biſhop *Pearſon* have learnedly endeavoured to make good the contrary, and to ſhew that the Author of them was no Impoſtor, but the True *Ignatius*, *Biſhop* of *Antioch*; but any Man void of Prejudice may perceive that they do it to ſerve a Cauſe. And on the other hand, any unprejudiced Perſon cannot but ſee that *Daillé*, *Salmaſius*, and *Blondel* (who take to the other ſide) have ſaid enough to prove that thoſe *ſeven Epiſtles*, or moſt of them that go under *Ignatius*'s Name are forged and Counterfeit. *Morinus*, among the Learned *Roman* Catholicks, is partly of this Opinion. And *Uſher* himſelf votes the Epiſtle, which is ſaid to be *Ignatius*'s, to *Polycarp* to be ſpurious.

Secondly, I anſwer that, *ſuppoſing* theſe Epiſtles which are commonly attributed to *Ignatius*, to be true and Authentick, yet I do not ſee that *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy* (which is the Thing we are diſcourſing about) is in the leaſt favoured and countenanced

nanced by what is ſaid in theſe Writings. For though we read ſo often *Biſhop*, *Presbyter*, and *Deacon*, yet we cannot think that a *Biſhop* then was the like Officer that is now: For it appears from ſeveral Paſſages in thoſe Epiſtles that it was but *one Congregation* or *Aſſembly* that a Biſhop preſided over, not a *Dioceſe*, as we now call it. So that, to ſpeak the plain Truth, a *Biſhop* then was a Paſtor or Rector of a Church. Again, ſuppoſing that it was *Ignatius* himſelf who ſo frequently calls upon the People to obey their Biſhops, as if they were diſtinct from Presbyters, yet he doth not thereby make them a *Different Order*, which is the Thing ſo much argued of late; but he only implies that One was at that time choſen by the *Presbytery* to preſide over them in point of Order and Priority, for the more methodical and peaceable managing of Church-Affairs, and that therefore he would have the People obey that Conſtitution, and ſhew Reſpect to the Biſhop or Preſident of the Presbytery, as well as to the Society of Presbyters who ſet him up. But all this while he drops not a Syllable which imports that there is any difference between a *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* as to their main Work, their Function and Order.

Nay in theſe very *Epiſtles* there are ſome Paſſages which plainly argue that the Author was not averſe to the *Equality* of Evangelical Miniſters. For though One was choſen by the reſt to be their *Preſident* on occaſion, and though he had the Title of *Biſhop* given him and ſo was diſtinct from the other Preſbyters, yet he was not Superiour to them, or of a diſtinct Order. *Ignatius* in his *Epiſtle* to the *Epheſians*, ſpeaking there of the Harmony that was between the Biſhop and Presbyters, interprets the *Presbytery*, mentioned in 1 *Tim.* iv. 4. concerning the *Community of Presbyters* or Paſtors, who then *jointly* governed the Church with the *Biſhop* or *Preſident*. And in the ſame Place, as he puts them in

in mind of their Duty in * *concurring with their Biſhop Oneſimus*, ſo he calls upon them † *to obey the Presbytery as well as the Biſhop with an undivided Mind*; and he calls this Body of Presbyters τὸ ἀξιονόμαστον πρεσβυτέριον, ἄξιον ὂν τῦ Θεῦ, *the Renowned Presbytery, worthy of God.* And in an other Epiſtle he ſaith, § *What is the Presbytery but a holy Convention, the Joint Counſellors and Aſſeſſors with the Biſhop?* Therefore as he had bid the *Trallians* obey and be ſubject to their Biſhop, ſo he commands them *to be ſubject to their Presbyters as to the Apoſtles of Chriſt:* yea concerning the *Deacons* he ſaith in the Epiſtle to the *Magneſians*, *Let all reverence them as Jeſus Chriſt:* which is equivalent with what he had ſaid with relation to the Biſhop, *Let him be obeyed as Jeſus Chriſt.* So that we ſee he makes *Biſhops* and *Deacons* alike, as to the Reſpect and Honour that muſt be paid to them; and muſt not *Presbyters* come in for the like Honour? Which plainly ſhews that he makes it his Buſineſs to extol and magnify the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and thereby to conciliate to them Reverence and Obedience, though he doth it in an extravagant way. But we can not gather thence that *Biſhops* are a diſtinct Office from *Presbyters*; nor from what he ſaith can *Presbyters* and *Deacons* be proved to be really different Miniſters in the Church; this we learn from the Sacred Writings. I deſire the impartial Reader to conſult the *Epiſtles* themſelves, and then I doubt not but he will be convinced that I had Reaſon to make theſe Remarks upon the foreſaid Paſſages which are in them. And in ſome Places

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* Ὅθεν ὑμῖν πρέπει συντρέχειν τῇ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου γνώμῃ.

† Ὑπακούοντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ἀπερισπάστῳ διανοίᾳ.

§ Τί δὲ Πρεσβυτέριον, ἀλλ' ἢ σύστημα ἱερὸν, σύμβουλοι καὶ συνεδρευταὶ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. Epiſt. ad Trallian.

of

of theſe Epiſtles the Reader will find that the Word πρεσβύτερος is but ſynonymous with ἐπίσκοπος.

Thirdly, In way of Anſwer I will offer this to the Conſideration of thoſe that are unprejudiced, that the Writings of other *Apoſtolical Men*, before or at the ſame time when *Ignatius* is ſuppoſed to have writ theſe Epiſtles, may give us ſome Light in this Matter. As thus; It is not likely that *Ignatius* would deliver Things that are contrary to or inconſiſtent with thoſe that *theſe* Perſons delivered. Now, it is evident from the Strain of the whole Epiſtle of St. *Clement* to the *Corinthians* (for I will begin with this Perſon, who was partly contemporary with *Ignatius*, but wrote before him) that the *Corinthian* Church was governed by a Plurality of Presbyters, not by a ſingle Biſhop. Of ſuch a Church-Officer he makes no mention throughout his whole Epiſtle, but very earneſtly calls upon the Chriſtians of *Corinth* * *to be ſubject to their Presbyters.* Though the Occaſion of his writing that Epiſtle was the *Corinthians* depoſing and caſting off one of their *Paſtors* (who is by the Friends of Dioceſan Epiſcopacy reckoned their *Biſhop*), yet he repreſents it all along as a diſplacing of a *Presbyter* only, and exhorts them to reverence † *them that are ſet over them*, and honour their Presbyters; not a Word of a *Biſhop*, as diſtinct from a Presbyter. And when in this Epiſtle he mentions *Biſhops* and *Deacons* as the only Eccleſiaſtical Officers, it is plain that he (as the Apoſtles in their Writings) by *Biſhops* underſtands *Presbyters.* And, which is very remarkable, even there where he particularly enumerates the *Jewiſh* Hierarchy, and compares the *Jewiſh* Miniſtry and the *Chriſtian* together, he mentions only *Biſhops* and *Deacons* as Officers of the Chriſtian Church. Theſe *Biſhops* therefore were no other than *Preſ-*

* Ὑποτάγητε τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις. † Τοὺς προηγουμένους.

byters, or elſe it will follow that there were no Presbyters at all, or there were more Biſhops than one in a Place; which *both* are abſurd and incredible Poſitions, as I have ſhewed, and as is confeſſed even by thoſe that we now contend with. That is a very Notable Paſſage which we meet with in this Epiſtle, Οἱ Ἀπόστολοι, &c. "The Apoſtles, ſaith he, "underſtood by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt that there "would ariſe a Contention about the Name of "*Epiſcopacy*; for this Cauſe therefore, having ab-"ſolute Knowledge thereof beforehand, they or-"dained the forenamed Officers", namely *Biſhops* and *Deacons*. As much as to ſay, To ſtifle all Objections that may be ſtarted hereafter about the Nature of *Epiſcopacy*, by reaſon of its Name (as we ſee at this Day) the Apoſtles ſettled theſe *two* Chief Officers in the Church, and *no more*, that it might be plainly ſeen that by *Biſhops* are meant no other than *Presbyters*, and conſequently that the Contention might ceaſe. And accordingly *Clement* afterwards explains *Epiſcopacy* by *Elders* or *Presbyters*, and no ſingle Biſhop is mentioned by him: Whereas if there had been ſuch an Officer ſet over the *Corinthian* Church, it is not to be doubted that he would have taken notice of him in the Epiſtle. It appears then that the Church of *Corinth* was governed by Presbyters at that Time when *Clement* wrote this Epiſtle, and not by a Biſhop of the Modern Cut. Wherefore let us compare *Ignatius* with *Clement*, and then we ſhall underſtand the Matter aright; for theſe two Apoſtolical Writers muſt not be thought to contradict one an other.

So if we conſult *Hermas*, an other Apoſtolical Writer (as the Epiſcopal Men acknowledge) and St. *Paul*'s Diſciple, we ſhall find that in his *Paſtor* he makes no Difference between Biſhops and Preſbyters, but lets us know that the Church was ruled by an Equality of *Presbyters*, whom ſometimes he calls *Biſhops*, becauſe they were Overſeers of the Flock.

Flock. Can we think that the True *Ignatius* (ſuppoſing him to be the Author of the *Epiſtles* that go under his Name) would oppoſe this Apoſtolick Writer about this Doctrine and Practice of the Church at that time? No, by no means.

Nor can we think that That holy Martyr *Polycarp*, St. *John*'s Scholar, and ſome time Contemporary with *Ignatius*, would jar with him as to this. Accordingly in his *Epiſtle to the Philippians* he takes no notice of any Single Biſhop that they had; and it is certain that if they had one, he would have mentioned him. But he exhorts them to * *be ſubject to the Presbyters and Deacons, as to God and Chriſt.* Set this of *Polycarp* againſt that of *Ignatius*, *Obey your Bishop as you would obey Chriſt*; or rather, Compare both together, and we ſhall underſtand the Meaning of both; which is this, that the Church was then governed by *Presbyters of equal Power*, and that there was no *Eccleſiaſtical Order* above them in the Church.

But the fierce Aſſerters of Epiſcopacy give no ear to this, but ſtand ready to aſſault us with freſh *Arguments*, if I may call them ſo. In the next Place then they argue from *Aërius*'s being condemned as a Heretick, becauſe he held that Biſhops and Presbyters were not diſtinct. There were many Contentions and Controverſies in the Church in the firſt Centuries, and ſometimes about little Things; but they all unanimouſly agreed in the Lawfulneſs of Epiſcopacy. Which ſhews the Senſe of Antiquity and of the Fathers about this Point. But then came *Aërius*, and was the firſt that aſſerted all Miniſters in the Church to be equal: But he was ſoon ſnibbed, and his Doctrine condemned, and voted by *Epiphanius* and other Fathers as Heretical. The Reply to which is this: 1ſt, Their *Unanimity*

* Ὑποτασσομένους τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις ὡς θεῷ καὶ χριστῷ.

as to this Matter is not of that Date and Duration which the Objectors repreſent it to be: for I have proved already that in the Firſt Century and ſome part of the enſuing one Epiſcopacy (as it is now underſtood) had no Footing. 2ly, Though Epiſcopacy was afterwards entertained, yet this is no real Commendation of it, nor doth it give Authority to it; for it might be proved that many Doctrines and Practices were unanimouſly embraced by the Antient Fathers, which had no Foundation in Scripture, and which afterwards were diſcovered to be falſe and groundleſs, and were accordingly rejected by the Church. 3ly, When there was an Alteration in the Government of the Church, it is no wonder that thoſe were put into the Catalogue of *Hereticks* who ſpake againſt this *Innovation*; no wonder that *Aërius* particularly was voted to be of that number. But this doth not affect the Cauſe itſelf. 4ly, *Epiphanius*, who reckons *Aërius* among Hereticks, becauſe he held that Biſhops and Preſbyters were of equal Authority, might as well have put in St. *Jerom* (who lived then in his Time) into the Catalogue for the ſame reaſon; for (as we ſhall ſee anon) in ſeveral Places in his Writings he aſſerts this *Equality*; nay, he defends it by making uſe of the very ſame Places of Scripture that *Aërius* uſed, as we ſhall find if we compare what St. *Jerom* ſaith with what *Epiphanius* hath delivered concerning *Aërius*. If *Aërius* then was an *Heretick*, it is not poſſible that St. *Jerom* ſhould be any other, ſeeing the very ſame Thing is aſſerted by both, and the very ſame Texts of Scripture are alledged by both. Yea, other Orthodox Fathers, as I have ſhewed before, produced the ſame Places to the ſame purpoſe. 5ly, This ſhould be conſidered (which few have taken notice of) that though *Aërius* was condemned as an Heretick for holding that a Biſhop is not a Superiour Order to Presbyters, yet it was not barely for this, (for then, as I have ſaid, St. *Jerom* ſhould have been

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ſentenced as a Heretick, and ſome *other Fathers* beſides) but becauſe he turned *Schiſmatick* hereupon, and made an unneceſſary Separation from the Church to which he belonged, *viz.* of *Sebaſtia* in *Pontus*, and grew turbulent and mutinous. Take it in the Words of the Learned *Stillingfleet*, "Upon the ſtricteſt En-"quiry it will prove true that *Jerom*, *Auſtin*, *Am-"broſe*, *Sedulius*, *Primaſius*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Theodoret*, "*Theophylact*, were all of *Aërius*'s Judgement as to "the Identity of both Name and Order of Biſhops "and Presbyters in the Primitive Church; but here "lay the Difference, *Aërius* from hence proceeded "to Separation from Biſhops and their Churches, "becauſe they were Biſhops". *Irenic.* chap. 6. But *Jerom*, who was well acquainted with what *Aërius* had ſaid and done, made no *Stir* about this Opinion; but though he was perfectly of *Aërius*'s Mind as to the Identity of Biſhops and Presbyters, yet he, for the ſake of Peace and Unity in the Church, made no Diſturbance about it. Sixthly and laſtly, I am inclined to think (upon examining the whole Matter as it is repreſented by thoſe who ſpeak of *Aërius*'s Conduct in this Affair) that he not only denied Biſhops and Presbyters to be two diſtinct Orders, but likewiſe he went ſo far as to aſſert that there was not *any difference* between a Biſhop and a Preſbyter: whereas a Presbyter as he was placed at the Head of his Fellow-Presbyters, by their own Conſent, upon emergent Occaſions, did *differ* from them, he being then as Chairman and Speaker. Now, this Priority or Preſidency is owned and approved of by St. *Jerom* and other Fathers of the Church: but it is probable that *Aërius* refuſed to own even this Occaſional Difference, and thereby broke all Order in the Church, and was the Author of Diſturbance and Confuſion: for which Reaſon his Doctrine was cenſured as Heretical and Pernicious. This I conceive is a ſufficient Reply to the Objection ſtarted about *Aërius*,

There is one Thing more which is wont to be alledged in behalf of Epiſcopacy, and that is that the *Apoſtles* had this Power and Juriſdiction which is now attributed to our *Biſhops*, and theſe being the *Succeſſors* of the Apoſtles, they juſtly have and enjoy the ſame Power and Juriſdiction. To which I anſwer, Nothing is more clear than that the *Biſhops* are not the *Succeſſors* of the Apoſtles; for how could they ſucceed the Apoſtles, when, according to our Epiſcopal Divines, they were contemporary in the Church with them? If Biſhops were together with the Apoſtles, if they were in the Church whilſt the Apoſtles were alive, it is not *Succeſſion*. Again, Biſhops can not be the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles any more than any other Miniſters of the Goſpel, that is, as they have Right to perform all the common Offices of a Miniſter of Chriſt. But if our Adverſaries mean that Biſhops ſucceed the Apoſtles, *as they were Apoſtles* ſtrictly ſo called, it is utterly denied that they ſucceed them in that manner; for theſe were Extraordinary Officers in the Church, they were immediately called and choſen by Chriſt, they were endued with the Power of working Miracles, they had an unlimited Commiſſion to preach, and plant the Goſpel; and accordingly they went from Place to Place, and were fixed to no particular one. Thus the *Apoſtleſhip* and *Epiſcopacy* are two diſtinct Offices, yea, wholly *Inconſiſtent*, the one being unconfined as to Juriſdiction and Place, the other confined as to both. See this *Inconſiſtency* further aſſerted and maintained by Dr. *Lightfoot*, vol. 1. p. 187. and by Dr. *Barrow* in his *Treatiſe of the Pope's Supremacy*. In ſhort, the Apoſtleſhip was a Perſonal Office, fixed in them and them only, and could not be transferred: And therefore *Biſhops* can not be the *Succeſſors* of the Apoſtles.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

AND thus I have returned an Anſwer to all the chief Arguments and Objections of the Epiſcopal Writers, and I hope I have made it appear that they contain nothing Conſiderable and Weighty in them.

But I will not content myſelf with this; but, ſeeing they alledge *Authority* and *Antiquity* for what they aſſert, I will alſo produce the Teſtimony of the *Fathers* and *Antient Writers* for what I have maintained all along in this Diſcourſe. I will not repeat what I had occaſion to cite out of *Clement* and *Ignatius*, who are Subſtantial Witneſſes in the Cauſe: but I will proceed to bring ſome other Antient *Fathers* on the Stage, and after them produce the Determinations of ſome *Noted* Councils compoſed of many Fathers. In *Juſtin Martyr's Second Apology*, where he gives a brief Account of the State of the Church at that time, there is no mention of any Eccleſiaſtical Perſons beſides the προεςὼς and the Deacons, that is, the *Presbyter* and *Deacons*; for if the former were any other Officer, he would have particularly named a *Presbyter* beſides. St. *Cyprian's* Writings ſufficiently teſtify that the Church at that time was jointly governed by a Presbyter taken from amongſt the reſt, who was upon occaſion conſtituted by them their Preſident or Moderator, and by the Body of Presbyters. He himſelf, then Biſhop of *Carthage*, calls theſe Presbyters his * *Collegues* and *Fellow-presbyters*. And † as he reſolved at firſt, ſo he profeſſes and promiſes that he will do nothing afterwards in Church-affairs *without their*

* Ego & Collegæ mei, & Compresbyteri. *Epiſt.* 66.

† A primordio Epiſcopatûs mei ſtatueram nihil ſine conſilio veſtro, meâ privatim ſententiâ gerere. *Lib.* 3. *Epiſt.* 10. *And the ſame he declares, Epiſt.* 6, 18, 24. *and in ſeveral other Epiſtles.*

Counſel and Conſent. His Words in an Epiſtle to *Cornelius* the Biſhop of *Rome* are very remarkable, and therefore I will ſet them down in the Language they were writ in, *Quanquam ſciam, Frater Chariſſime, pro mutuâ dilectione quam debemus & exhibemus invicem nobis, florentiſſimo illic Clero tecum præſidenti, & ſanctiſſimæ atque ampliſſimæ plebi legere te ſemper Literas noſtras.* We ſee here how Things were carried in the Church in thoſe days; the Stile he uſes to the Biſhop of *Rome* is *Brother*, and he lets us know that the *Clergy* or *Presbytery* of the Church of *Rome* did *preſide together with the Biſhop*, and that the Church-affairs were communicated even to the *Laity* ſometimes. And hear what that *Cornelius*, Biſhop of *Rome*, ſaid of himſelf, *Omni actu ad me perlato, placuit contrahi Presbyterium. Aderant etiam Epiſcopi quinque, qui et hodie præſentes fuerunt, ut firmato conſilio, quid circa perſonam eorum obſervari deberet, Conſenſu omnium ſtatueretur.* Epiſt. 46. Which Words reſpect the Practice of that *Roman* Biſhop in the Affair of the *Novatians*, or rather of thoſe who happily fell off from the *Novatian* Schiſm, and returned to the Church: and we ſee the Great Pontif did nothing *without his Presbyters*: all was acted *by Common Advice*; nothing was done *without their Counſel and Concurrence.* This was the way of Church-government of old in the Weſtern and in the *African* Churches; and it obtained every where elſe. Let any Man judge whether this be the Character of our Modern Biſhops.

St. *Ambroſe* the good Biſhop of *Milan*, or (as ſome think) *Hilary* the Deacon gives us this Definition of a * *Biſhop*; namely, that *he is the Firſt or Chief among the Presbyters.* And therefore Epiſcopacy cannot be an Order different from Prieſt-

* Hic enim Epiſcopus eſt, qui inter Presbytereos primus eſt. *Comment. in 1 Epiſt. ad Timoth. cap.* 3.

hood,

hood, for the being the *Firſt* or *Chief* of the Kind, doth not introduce an *other Kind.* St. *Auguſtine* freely owns in one of his Epiſtles, that *Biſhop* is but a * Name or Term of Honour, which hath by Uſe and Cuſtom prevailed in the Church; not that it is the Title of a Diſtinct Office or Order. The Words of the Great Golden-mouthed Biſhop are of great Value, though they are very brief, † *Presbyters*, ſaith he, *have received the Power and Office of Teaching and Governing the Church.* This is as much as can be ſaid of the higheſt Function in the Church, and it agrees to *Presbyters*, according to the Acknowledgement of this Excellent and Pious Father.

But of all the Antient Fathers and Writers of the Church, St. *Jerom* is the cleareſt and fulleſt in this Point, and therefore I will ſet him before the Reader in the laſt Place. In one of his Epiſtles, he thinks fit to check the preſumptuous Notion which ſome Biſhops at that time had conceived of themſelves, by reminding them of this, That ‖ *they ought to know that they are not Lords, but Prieſts* or *Presbyters.* And what Power the Presbyters have, he acquaints us in an other Place, where he calls them § the *Senate and the Common Council of Presbyters, by which the Churches are ruled.* But the Chief Store-houſes of Arguments againſt Biſhops are in this Author's *Commentary* on the Firſt Chapter of the *Epiſtle* to *Titus*, and in his celebrated *Epiſtle to Evagrius:* Therefore out of theſe I will furniſh the Reader with ample Teſtimonies againſt

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* Vocabulum honoris quod Eccleſiæ uſu obtinnit. *Epiſt. ubi ſe cum* Hieronymo *confert.*

† Καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν ἔσιν ἀναδεδεγμένοι, καὶ προσασίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας· Homil. 11. in 1 *Tim.* iii. 8.

‖ Epiſcopi ſacerdotes ſe eſſe noverint, non Dominos. *Epiſt. ad Nepotian.*

§ Senatus & cœtus Presbyterorum, & commune conſilium quo Eccleſiæ gubernantur. *Commentar. in* Iſai. l. 2. c. 3.

Dioceſan

Dioceſan Epiſcopacy. In the foreſaid Commentary he tells us, that though ſome Biſhops claim to be above Presbyters, yet that they are ſo *is rather from* ‖ *Cuſtom, than from the Truth and Reality of any ſuch Thing founded on our Lord's Inſtitution, and that they ought to rule the Church in Common with the Presbyters.* And he adds further, that § *a Presbyter and a Biſhop are the very ſame, and before the Time that there were Parties and Diviſions in Religion, by the Inſtinct of the Devil, the Government of the Church was carried wholly by the common Advice of Presbyters: But afterwards, when Parties and Contentions aroſe, it was univerſally agreed upon, that one ſhould be choſen out of the Number of Presbyters, to preſide above the reſt, and to have the whole Care and Management of the Church, and ſo to prevent Schiſm.* Therefore this was not the *Primitive Way*, this was not according to our *Lord's Inſtitution*, as he had ſaid before.

Next, I will produce St. *Jerom*'s Teſtimony out of his *Epiſtle* to *Evagrius*, where he aſſerts *, That *the Apoſtle clearly teaches that Biſhops and Presbyters are the ſame.* But † *afterwards one of the Presbyters was made choice of, to be ſet over the reſt, for the avoiding of Schiſm and Faction in the Church. So,*

‖ Noverint ſe magis conſuetudine quàm diſpoſitionis Dominicæ veritate Presbyteris eſſe majores, & in commune debere Eccleſiam regere. *Comment.* in 1 *Tit.* i. 5.

§ Idem Presbyter qui & Epiſcopus, & antequam Diaboli inſtinctu ſtudia in Religione fierent, & diceretur in Populis "Ego ſum Pauli, "ego Apollo, ego autem Cephæ", communi Presbyterorum conſilio Eccleſiæ gubernabantur. Poſtquam verò unuſquiſque eos quas baptizaverat ſuos putabat eſſe, non Chriſti, in toto orbe decretum eſt ut unus de presbyteris electus ſuperponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis Eccleſiæ cura pertineret, & ſchiſmatum ſemina tollerentur. *Ibid.*

* Cùm Apoſtolus perſpicuè doceat eoſdem eſſe presbyteros quos & Epiſcopos.

† Quòd autem poſtea unus electus eſt qui cæteris præponeretur, in ſchiſmatis remedium factum eſt; nè unuſquiſque ad ſe trahens Eccleſiam Chriſti rumperet.

faith

ſaith he, *at Alexandria*, Mark *the Evangeliſt was placed above the other Presbyters of that Church, by their Conſent, and they called him Biſhop.* A little after he ſaith, the greateſt Difference between a *Presbyter* and a *Biſhop* is this, That * *one is the Name of Age, the other of Dignity:* But they both meet in the ſame Perſon. And in an other Place, in this Epiſtle he tells us, that † *nothing was done in the Church without the Counſel and Advice of the Presbyters.* Thus it is plain, that though, according to ſome Mens Apprehenſions, this Writer ſeems in ſome Places to ſpeak in Favour of the *Epiſcopal Order* and *Primacy*, where he ſpeaks of this Matter only by the Bye; yet it is certain, that in the fore-named Places (his *Commentary* and *Epiſtle*) where he deſignedly and purpoſely treats of this Subject, he ſhews himſelf a profeſſed Enemy to Epiſcopacy, and levels Biſhops with Prieſts, and makes them one and the ſame Office.

But to invalidate St. *Jerom*'s Teſtimony, it is objected againſt him, that he was a Man of a very warm Temper, and made good *Eraſmus*'s Character of him, that he *had* || *a vehement and ardent Wit*, and took Pleaſure in oppoſing and contradicting of others. He was a Man of a free and open Spirit, and would take Notice of Faults even in Men of great Worth and Repute, as *Ambroſe*, *Hilary*, *Lactantius*, and others: And ſo it is no Wonder that he exerciſed his Wit and Acrimony in Writing againſt the Order of Biſhops in the Church. And beſides, there was ſomething of Pique in it; for *Bethlehem*, where *Jerom* took up his Quarters, belonged to the Dioceſe of the Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, whom St. *Jerom* looked upon as a Favourer of the *Arians*, and communicated not

* Aliud ætatis, aliud dignitatis eſt nomen.
† Sine quorum conſilio nihil agebatur in Eccleſiâ.
|| In vitâ S. Hieronymi.

with

with him: On which Occaſion perhaps he retained a Grudge and Diſlike againſt the whole Order. And ſome add, that the Clergy of *Rome* (where he reſided before) had an ill Opinion of him, which was the Cauſe of his leaving them, and it may be of entertaining ill Thoughts of the Biſhop and the reſt of that Order.

But theſe are very idle Surmiſes, and weak and fooliſh Objections; and no Man of ſerious and compoſed Thoughts will ſuffer them to have any Influence upon him. For as for the laſt, which I will ſpeak of firſt, it was purely on the Account of the Ill Lives and Manners of the *Roman Clergy* that he left that Place; for he was continually finding Fault with them for their indecent Behaviour, which made *them* uneaſy, and *him* at laſt, in ſo much that he went and lived a retired Life at *Bethlehem*. Again, as to his Diſlike of the Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of his Inclination to the *Arian* Hereſy, we have no Reaſon to imagine that that ſhould give him a Prejudice againſt the *Biſhops*, and even againſt *Epiſcopacy* it ſelf. This is below the Thoughts of any Man of tolerable Senſe, eſpecially ſeeing there were ſo many of that High Station, who were Perſons of ſingular Worth, and ſignalized themſelves by their appearing againſt the *Arian* Doctrine.

Then, as to the other Part of the Objection, that *Jerom* was a Man of a *warm Temper*, it amounts to no more than this, that he was a Perſon of extraordinary Parts, and of a great and penetrating Wit. Whence (as * Dr. *Du Pin* hath well obſerved) *Damaſus*, the learned Biſhop of *Rome*, taking notice of St. *Jerom*'s Merit, kept him with him there, that he might have a Man that was able to anſwer all Queſtions propoſed from all Parts. And we know what St. *Auguſtine* ſaid of him, *Nemo*

* Eccleſ. Hiſt. Fifth Century.

hominum

hominum ſcivit quod Hyeronymus ignoravit. And all the ſucceeding Fathers had a very great and high Eſteem of him. As to his *free* and *open Spirit*, which is mentioned to his Diſparagement, it ſhould rather be alledged to his Advantage and Commendation. If we ſhould grant that he was ſometime in the Exceſs, as when he fell upon *Vigilantius* and *Rufinus*, yet this Freedom is much better than Flattery and Colloguing. But the Liberty which he generally took, was well employed; for he reproved and cenſured all Miſcarriages, and *Epiſcopacy* among the reſt. And the Warmer St. *Jerom* was, the more probable it is that he ſpoke *Truth*: For that Temper renders Men bold and free, and Truth is never found out and maintained without theſe Qualities. The *Phlegmatick* are afraid to ſpeak, eſpecially if there be Authority and Cuſtom againſt them. But the divine Wiſdom made uſe of the Vehemency of this Holy Man, as he did of *Luther* and others, for the effectual detecting of Errour, and diſcovering the Corruptions that are crept into the Church. Accordingly he proclaims it to be his Belief and Judgement, that in the Apoſtles Writings, there appears to be no eſſential Diſtinction between a Biſhop and a Presbyter, but that the Difference between them was introduced afterwards on the Pretence of avoiding Schiſm.

And we ſee he is not ſingular, as is clear from what was alledged before out of the Writings of *Ignatius*, *Clement*, *Cyprian*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Theodoret*, and others, whom I had Occaſion to mention. From all theſe we may gather, that the *Scripture-Biſhop* was the Chief of the Presbyters, but he was not of a diſtinct Order from them. And as for the Times after the Apoſtles, none of theſe Writers, nor any Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian tells us, that a Perſon of an Order ſuperiour to Presbyters was ſet over the Presbyters. 'Tis true, one ſingle Perſon is recorded to have preſided over the College

of

of Presbyters, but this College had the ſame Power with that ſingle Perſon, though not that particular Dignity of Preſidentſhip. The ſhort is, the *Biſhops* in thoſe Times were *Presbyters*, only he that preſided over the Body of Presbyters was *called Biſhop*, whilſt the Reſt were generally known by the Title of *Presbyters:* And the Biſhop was ſtill but a Presbyter as to Order and Function, though for Diſtinction-ſake he was known by the Name of *Biſhop*. He was Superiour to the other Presbyters as long as he executed his Office, as a Chairman in a Committee is above the reſt of the Juſtices whilſt he holds that Place. It was generally the *Antienteſt* Presbyter that was choſen to preſide over the College of Presbyters, but he had no Superiority of *Power*; all the Priority or Primacy which he had, was that of *Order*. Here is the Antient Pattern: Why is it not followed?

To ſingle Fathers, we may add *Councils*, who deliver the ſame Senſe. One at preſent ſhall ſerve for all, by Reaſon of its great Antiquity, and its undoubted Authority and Certainty. About the Year of our Lord 398, above two hundred Biſhops met together at the Fourth Council of *Carthage*, and unanimouſly agreed on the following Canons; * *A Biſhop muſt not ordain Any without the Counſel of his Clergy.* † *He muſt hear no Man's Cauſe unleſs his Clergy be preſent; otherwiſe the Biſhop's Sentence ſhall be void.* (Which we find alſo inſerted into the Body of the || Canon Law). § *Whilſt a Biſhop ſits, he ſhall not ſuffer a Presbyter to ſtand.* ** *He muſt know that he is but a Colleague of the Presbyters.* So according to an other Antient Council, *A Presbyter* †† *was to partake of the Honour of the Chair.*

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* Can. 22. † Can. 23. || 15 Qu. cap. 7. nullus. § Can. 34. ** Can. 35.

†† Τῆς μὲν τιμῆς κατὰ καθέδραν μετέχειν. Ancyran. Conc. Can. 1.

Without

Without naming any other Antient Canons, it ſufficiently appears from theſe already cited, what was the conſtant Practice of the Primitive Churches, namely, that there was not that Diſtance between Biſhop and Presbyter as there is now, and that nothing was done without the mutual Concurrence and Conſent of the Presbyters and their Preſident: They all acted in Conjunction and Concert. Nothing is more evident in the Antient Writings of the Church than that they *jointly* ruled, and adminiſtred Eccleſiaſtical Affairs: But the Title of *Biſhop* was appropriated to him that preſided over the Presbytery.

This then is the true Account of the Matter, Biſhops were Elders or Presbyters, and therefore of the ſame Order, but the Biſhops differed from the Presbyters in this only, that they were choſen by the Elders to preſide over them at their Eccleſiaſtical Meetings and Aſſemblies *. The Biſhop was the Firſt in Number among the Presbyters, but was not above them in Power and Juriſdiction. The Presbyters were a co-ordinate Body with the Biſhop, not ſubordinate to him. There was not any Power or Authority belonging to one excluſive of the reſt. But in After-Ages the Presbyters of ſome Churches parted with their Liberty and Right, and agreed among themſelves, that Eccleſiaſtical Matters ſhould be managed by the Biſhop wholly. I have proved that this is againſt the Suffrage of the *Antient Fathers*, both ſingly and in Council, which was the Thing I undertook.

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* Epiſcopi & Presbyteri una ordinatio eſt: uterque enim ſacerdos eſt, ſed Epiſcopus primus eſt; ut omnis Epiſcopus Presbyter ſit, non tamen omnis Presbyter Epiſcopus; hic enim Epiſcopus eſt qui inter Presbyteros primus eſt. *Ambroſ. ſeu Hilar.* in 1 *Tim.* iii.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

AND now, laſtly, I will make it appear, that this is as contrary to the Suffrage and Teſtimony of the *Church of England*, and its learnedeſt Divines. It is certain that it was the Judgement of our firſt learned and pious *Reformers* that Presbytery and Epiſcopacy were the ſame Order, as appears from a *Manuſcript* of Archbiſhop *Cranmer* and other Biſhops, cited by Biſhop *Stillingfleet*, *Irenic.* Part 2. Chap. 8. wherein they profeſſedly aſſert the ſame. There, and in Biſhop *Burnet's Collections*, Part 1. we find it declared by the Archbiſhop, that *Biſhops and Prieſts were one Office in the Beginning of Chriſt's Religion.* And other Biſhops, Doctors, and Divines agreed to it. Hear what one who was himſelf of the Epiſcopal Order ſaith, in anſwer to a Writer of the Church of *Rome*, who it ſeems laid great Streſs on the *Difference between Prieſts and Biſhops*, which he fancied. "Is it", ſaith Biſhop * *Jewel*, (for he is the excellent Perſon I quote) "ſo horrible a Hereſy as he makes it, to "ſay, that by the Scriptures of God a Biſhop and "a Prieſt are all one? Verily, *Chryſoſtom* ſaith, "*Inter Epiſcopum & Presbyterum intereſt ferme nihil.* "*Between a Biſhop and a Presbyter, in a Man-*"*ner, there is no Difference*", Chryſoſt, in 1 *Tim.* Hom. 11. St. *Jerom* ſaith ſomewhat in rougher ſort, *Audio quendam in tantam erupiſſe vecordiam ut Diaconos Presbyteris, id eſt, Epiſcopis anteferret: cum Apoſtolus perſpicuè doceat, eoſdem eſſe Presbyteros, quos Epiſcopos.* "I hear ſay, there is one be-"come ſo peeviſh, that he ſets Deacons before "Prieſts, that is to ſay, before Biſhops: Whereas

* Defence of the Apology of the Church of *England.* Part 2. Chap. 3. and 9.

"the

" the Apoſtle plainly teacheth us that Prieſts and " Biſhops be all one. *Hieron. ad Evagr.* St. *Au-* " *guſtine* ſaith, *Quid eſt Epiſcopus niſi primus Pres-* " *byter, hoc eſt, ſummus Sacerdos?* What is a " Biſhop but the firſt Prieſt, that is to ſay, the " higheſt Prieſt? *Auguſt. in Queſt. N. & V. Teſt.* " *Quæſt.* 101. So ſaith St. *Ambroſe, Epiſcopi &* " *Presbyteri una eſt ordinatio: uterque enim ſacer-* " *dos eſt; ſed Epiſcopus primus eſt.* There is but " one Conſecration of Prieſt and Biſhop, for both " of them are Prieſts, but the Biſhop is the firſt. " *Ambroſe* in 1 *Tim.* cap. 3". Thus Biſhop *Jewel*; and he adds, that *theſe and more Holy Fathers, together with St. Paul the Apoſtle*, atteſt the ſame Thing.

The Identity of the Office of Biſhops and Prieſts was aſſerted by other great and famous Writers of the Church of *England*; as Dr. *Whitaker*, Divinity Profeſſor in *Cambridge*, whoſe expreſs Words in ſeveral of his Writings are, that at firſt *Presbyter and Biſhop were the ſame in the Chriſtian Churches.* Biſhop *Bilſon* * quotes St. *Jerom* for the ſame Purpoſe. This was the Judgement of Dr. *Humfrey* †, the King's Profeſſor of Divinity at *Oxford*; and of Dr. *Fulk* ||, in his Notes on the *Rhemiſh Teſtament.* The judicious Mr. *Hooker* § holds, that Epiſcopacy may be abrogated, and conſequently is not of Divine and Apoſtolical Right, but is the Political Inſtitution of the Church. The learned Mr. *Maſon*, who, in his *Defence of the Ordination*, &c. maintains, that Biſhop and Presbyter differ, as to Juriſdiction, yet holds, that they differ not as to their *Order.* Archbiſhop *Uſher*'s Model, entituled

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* The true Difference between Chriſtian Subjection, *&c.* Part 2. 233, 234.

† Puritano-Bap. Confutat. *pag.* 262, 265.

|| On *Tit.* i. and on Philip. 1.

§ Eccleſ. Polit. *chap.* 3.

The Reduction of Epiſcopacy unto the Form of Synodical Government received in the antient Church, is well known to be This, that the Biſhops, as Preſidents or Super-intendents, are to rule in Common with the Paſtors of Pariſhes: They muſt all jointly govern the Church, and to that End often meet together in Synods Dioceſan, Provincial, National. He holds Primitive Epiſcopacy to have been only a Preſidency of Order, as thus: There was one Preſident over the Presbyters, and he is called the *Angel of the Church*, in *Rev.* ii. 1. and *Biſhop* by *Ignatius*. This Preſident, Angel, or Biſhop, together with the Body of Presbyters, ruled the Church. *With the Biſhop*, ſaith he, *who was the chief Preſident, the reſt of the Diſpenſers of the Word and Sacraments were joined in the common Government of the Church.* This is the right Apoſtolical Government, namely, the Government of the Church by the united Suffrages of the Clergy. The Judgement of this learned Prelate may be known yet further from Dr. *Bernard*, who writ his *Life*, and aſſures us, that he held a Biſhop and Presbyter to differ only in *Degree*, not in *Order*. And his expreſs Words quoted by Dr. *Parr*, in his *Appendix to the Archbiſhop's Life*, are theſe; "a Presbyter hath "the ſame Order in Specie with a Biſhop: *Ergò*, a "Presbyter hath equally an intrinſical Power to give "Orders, and is equal to him in the Power of Order". This alſo was the Opinion of the renowned Dr. *Reinolds*, in King *James* the Firſt's Reign.

Mr. *Thorndyke* is deſervedly acknowledged to be a Great Man: His Writings ſhew that he was an able Textuary, and well verſed in the Sacred Records, and the Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church. He hath many uncommon Obſervations and Arguments grounded on Scripture, which he was profoundly skilled in. And accordingly he aſſerts, * that

* In his *Due way of compoſing Differences.*

St.

St. *Paul ſet Presbyters, or a Body of Presbyters over the Places he had planted and converted, but no Biſhops, that is, ſingle Perſons, as Overſeers over them; but thoſe Presbyters are ſtiled Biſhops, as Jerom and others have obſerved.* Then he quotes *Acts* xx. 17. where *Biſhops*, he ſaith, are *Presbyters.* And ſo he acknowledges, that *Bishops*, in *Phil.* i. 1. are *Presbyters:* And the *Elders to be ordained in every City*, Tit. i. 5. are the ſame with *Bishops*, ver. 7. Thus from theſe Texts this learned Man gathers, (as ſeveral of the Antients had done before him) that the *Bishops* in the Firſt Times were no other than *Presbyters.* He adds, that the Apoſtle *Paul* had the Care of all the Churches, and therefore he placed no Biſhops over the Presbyteries, but was, as it were, their Biſhop. So the Apoſtle *Peter*, who took Care of the *Jewish* Converts (as St. *Paul* of the *Gentile* ones) ſet Presbyters, but no Biſhops over them. This was the State of the Chriſtian Church at firſt, according to the Judgement of this excellent Writer of our Church.

What he further adds, ſavours not of his Accuracy and Judgement, but ſeems to be ſaid in Compliance with others. He ſuggeſts this, that as the Apoſtles withdrew, ſo Biſhops came over the Presbyters in their Place; and they were inſtituted in the Apoſtles Times. But he comes in now with his *Bishops* too late, and ſeeing *he* denied them before, *we* may with as much Reaſon do it now. With a ſtrange kind of Fetch, he would make *Timothy* and *Titus* Biſhops over the Churches of *Epheſus* and *Crete*, when he had as good as excluded them before. If he perſiſts in this, he contradicts all the Writers that have defended the Cauſe of Epiſcopacy; for they date Epiſcopacy before this time, as is plain from the Inſtances they produce out of the *Acts*, &c. That therefore which we are to take notice of in this learned Writer is, that *Presbyters*, not *Bishops*, were ſet over the Chriſtian

Churches at the Beginning, and that afterwards in ſucceeding Times (which he as peremptorily vouches in other Places as what he had ſaid here) the College of Presbyters ruled with the Biſhop, and that nothing was done without them. This he frequently owns to be atteſted by all Church-Writers.

Next to Mr. *Thorndyke*'s Teſtimony, I will add that of the Author of the *Irenicum*, who poſitively aſſerts, that Biſhops and Prieſts were the ſame Office at firſt. And he looks upon this to be an univerſal Acknowledgement, * *The Power or Order*, ſaith he, *is alike both in Biſhops and Presbyters, according to the Acknowledgement of all.* He derives the Church-Government among Chriſtians, from that of the *Jewiſh Synagogue*, and accordingly tells us, that the *Elders of the Synagogue* at firſt ruled in Common, but afterwards agreed, that nothing ſhould be done without the *Prince of the Sanhedrim*, and that all Ordinations, and the like Eccleſiaſtical Adminiſtrations ſhould be null and void without his Licence †. "So was it", ſaith he, "as to the "fixed Officers of the *Chriſtian Church*: For if "we conſider them in their firſt State and Period, "they ruled the Church in Common; before the "Juriſdiction of Presbyters was reſtrained by mu"tual Conſent, they enjoyed the ſame Liberty that "the Presbyters among the *Jews* did, of ordain"ing other Presbyters by that Power they were in"veſted in at their own Ordination". I offer an other Paſſage in the ſame Author to be conſidered, and 'tis well worth our Conſidering and Weighing. "They have", ſaith he, "either a very low Opinion "of the Work of a Goſpel-Biſhop, or very little "Conſideration of the Zeal, Activity, and Dili"gence, which was then uſed in Preaching, Re"proving, Exhorting, in Seaſon, out of Seaſon, "that think *One* ſingle Perſon was able to undergo

* Irenic. *Part* 2. *Chap.* 6. † In the ſame Chapter.

"it

" it all. Diſcipline was a great deal more ſtrict " then, Preaching more diligent, Men more ap- " prehenſive of the Weight of their Function, than " for any to undertake ſuch a Care and Charge " of Souls that it was impoſſible for them ever to " know, obſerve or watch over, ſo as to give an " Account for them. Beſides, while we ſuppoſe " this *One* Perſon employed in the Duties of his " Flock, what Leiſure or Time could ſuch an one " have to preach to the *Gentiles* and unbelieving " *Jews* in order to their Converſion? The Apo- " ſtles certainly did not aim at the ſetting up the " Honour of any *one Perſon*, making the Office of " the Church a Matter of State and Dignity more " than Employment; but they choſe Men for their " Activity in Preaching the Goſpel, and for their " Uſefulneſs in labouring to add continually to the " Church. Men that were employed in the Church " then, did not conſult for their Eaſe or Honour, " and thought it not enough for them to ſit ſtill, " and bid others work". Thus He, in the ſame Chapter in his *Irenicum*, the learnedeſt Book that he ever wrote. See Biſhop *Burnet's Collections*, pag. 331, 332. where the Identity of the Power of Biſhops and Presbyters is aſſerted.

I might add this to all that hath been ſaid, that all our Churchmen of Moderation and Temper hold that there may be, and actually are True Churches, ſuch as thoſe of the *Reformed beyond the Seas*, though they have no *Biſhops*: And ſo accordingly they hold that Ordination by Presbyters is lawful and valid. They ſay, indeed, that Epiſcopal Orders are required of all that are Miniſters in our Church, becauſe here are Biſhops to confer Orders: But thoſe that cannot have them, as foreign Reformed Divines who live under no Biſhops, are lawful Miniſters without them, and the Churches they are of, are True Churches. Elſe our higheſt Churchmen, as Dr. *Couſins* and others,

would not have communicated with them. From hence it follows, that *Epiſcopacy*, in the late Acception of it, is not a divine Inſtitution, and to be neceſſarily maintained in the Church; for if it were, there could not be a True Church without it. It is therefore in effect owned by the learnedeſt Men of our Church, that Biſhops and Presbyters are the ſame Order and Office, and what Power is in one, is in the other.

But this is the Senſe not only of the learnedeſt Men of our Church, Archbiſhops, Biſhops, and others, but of the whole Church itſelf. As I will make it appear from the *Office for ordaining of Presbyters* or *Prieſts* in our Church: Where we find that the *Epiſtle* for that Occaſion is either *Acts* xx. which contains St. *Paul*'s Charge to the *Elders of Epheſus*; or the Third Chapter of the firſt *Epiſtle* to *Timothy*, which contains the *Office of a Biſhop*. Whence we muſt neceſſarily gather, that either the Office for this Occaſion is *impertinent*, and nothing to the Purpoſe, (which no wiſe Man will admit of) or elſe that our Church looked on the *Overſeers* or *Biſhops* of *Epheſus*, and the *Bishops* in *Timothy*'s Epiſtle, to be *Presbyters*. This moſt aſſuredly was the Senſe of our Church, when ſhe compoſed this Office. By this alſo we may interpret what our Church ſaith in an other Place, namely, in the *Preface* to the *Form and Manner of conſecrating Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons*; where there are theſe Words, *There have been theſe Orders of Miniſters from the Apoſtles time, in Chriſt's Church, Bishops, Prieſts, and Deacons.* And afterwards they are called *theſe Orders*, which muſt have been ſpoken in a *large Senſe*, not properly and ſtrictly, the Word *Orders* ſignifying only *different Dignities*, not *diſtinct Offices* in the Church.

I will further ſhew, that the Biſhops themſelves, and our whole Church condemn this Pre-eminence of Biſhops above Presbyters, and allow Presbyters

to

to exerciſe that Power which at other times they pretend is appropriated to Biſhops. I mean that Power which we ſee exerciſed by ſome *Deans*, and by all *Arch-deacons* in their ſeveral Places of Juriſdiction. There are *Deans* that are exempted Perſons, they are not ſubject to the Biſhop's Viſitation, but have a Juriſdiction by themſelves, as the Dean of *Bocking*, the Dean of *Battel*, &c. and by Vertue of their Place and Station in the Church they have *Power of Excommunication.* This is a Branch of our own Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution: And yet it is well known that *Excommunication* is ſaid by moſt of our Churchmen to be one of the chiefeſt Parts of the *Epiſcopal* Authority. Notwithſtanding this, we ſee in this Inſtance that *Presbyters*, by our Laws and Conſtitutions, have Power to *Excommunicate* as well as *Biſhops.* Again, to inſtitute or deſign Prieſts to their particular Cures, is ſaid to be of Epiſcopal Right, and yet this is done by ſome *Deans.* Alſo, the Inſpection into the Manners of Prieſts, and the Admoniſhing, Cenſuring, and Depriving of them are of *Epiſcopal* Power, yet there are *Deans* that can do this. But if there be ſuch a Power proper to *Biſhops*, how can it be devolved on the *Deans*, who are but bare *Prieſts?*

So for *Arch-deacons*, they Viſit, they Cenſure, they Inſpect the Manners of the Clergy, they Rule and Govern: Which if they can lawfully do, it is plain that Biſhops and Presbyters are not two diſtinct Orders; for theſe Latter exert that Power and Juriſdiction which are ſaid to belong wholly to *Biſhops.* If there was ſuch an Apoſtolical Appointment, that Biſhops, and Biſhops only, ſhould rule over Presbyters, how can this be reconciled with the Prieſts ruling over other Prieſts, as in the Caſe of *Arch-deacons?* Whence it is evident, that Epiſcopacy is only of human and ſecular Original, and hath no Authority from the Goſpel and

our Saviour's Preſcriptions. It is founded on the Laws and Conſtitutions of the Realm: Let any Man fairly and rationally anſwer this that I have offered, and which is known to be Matter of Fact. Seeing it is ſuch, and none ever attempted to oppoſe the Truth of it, it is clear that our Church acknowledges Epiſcopal Juriſdiction to belong to Prieſts. So that whilſt our Churchmen are fiercely remonſtrating againſt the Equality of Biſhops and Presbyters, they are confuted by the Practice of the Church: By which it is virtually acknowledged that Epiſcopacy is the ſame with Presbytery. We ſee that by the Laws of the Land, (which are adopted into thoſe of our Church) and by the conſtant Conſent and Approbation of the Superiour Clergy, Presbyters diſcharge the Office of Biſhops. Which is a plain Confeſſion that there is no real Difference in their Order and Function. This directly and undeniably follows from the Practice of *Deans* and *Arch-deacons*, who act as *Biſhops*, without controul, yea, with the Biſhops Allowance and good liking. Therefore there is no Subordination of one to the other, but their Power is the ſame. If this be not allowed, then it will follow that theſe exempt *Deans* and all *Arch-deacons* are Uſurpers and Invaders of the Rights of the Biſhops; and yet (which is incredible) the Biſhops at the ſame time approve of them. Which I ſuppoſe none of the Church of *England* will admit: And therefore I prove from the fore-mentioned Cuſtom and Practice in our Church, that ſhe herſelf gives the ſame Power to *Presbyters* that ſhe doth to *Biſhops*. If you ſay ſhe gives not the ſame Power to all Presbyters, that is nothing to the Purpoſe; for if ſhe gives it to Any, ſhe thereby owns that the Epiſcopal Power is communicable, and that it is not lodged wholly in one Rank of Clergymen, but that Presbyters may ſhare in it. Thus I have finiſhed

all

all my *Arguments* againſt *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy*, or Epiſcopacy as it is now modelled; and I have anſwered all the *Objections* againſt them.

CHAP. XV.

NOW then let us ſee what is the True State and Account of the whole Matter, that is, what is to be granted in this Controverſy, and what is not to be granted, but denied. That which we willingly grant is this, that the Eccleſiaſtical Government by *Biſhops* (as we now take that Word) is very *Antient*. That which we deny is, that it is of *Apoſtolical Antiquity*. Firſt, it cannot be denied that Epiſcopacy, as we underſtand it at this Day, was brought into ſome Chriſtian Churches very early. It is not requiſite to be preciſe in the exact Time when this happened, for by little and little there began to be a Difference made between the Power of a Biſhop and a Presbyter. Perhaps it might be proved, that within an Age and an Half after the Apoſtles, theſe two were diſtinguiſhed, and a Biſhop had a greater Power than a Presbyter, in ſome Churches, though not in all. In the Times ſoon after the Apoſtles there may be diſcerned ſome Change in this Affair of the Church: But in *After-Ages* the Imparity between Biſhops and Presbyters was plainly diſcernable: There was not only a Difference of Juriſdiction, but of Order among the Miniſters of the Church. In Proceſs of Time, the Foreman, or Head of the Presbyters, climbed to a Degree above the reſt, and became ſuch a Ruler as we now call by the Name of *Biſhop*; that is, One that rules over a Multitude of Clergymen. By *Ambition* and *Covetouſneſs*, Epiſcopacy began to be *Dioceſan*, and to claim an Aſſociation of many Churches.

Churches. Theſe puſhed Men on to exerciſe Dominion over their Fellow-Presbyters: and at laſt from the ſame Root ſprang *Archbiſhops*, *Metropolitans*, *Patriarchs*, *Primates*, and at length a *Pope* above them all. The Deſign was to lower the Presbyters, to humble the Inferiour Clergy (as we now alſo call them) to make them mere *Nethinims* and *Gibeonites*, and to exalt themſelves to the higheſt Pitch they could arrive to. It was only to aggrandize the Biſhops and their Dignity, that the Power of Ordination (to mention only that now) was appropriated to them. And the Second Council of *Sevil*, Can. 7. was ſo free and open as to own this, *Let the Presbyters know* (ſay they) *that the Power of ordaining Presbyters and Deacons is forbidden them by the Apoſtolical See, by virtue of New Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, and to uphold the Dignity of the Biſhops.* Thus Pride and Arrogance, and a Deſire of being Great and Wealthy introduced Prelacy, that is, the Government of Biſhops (as they are now partly) into the Church at firſt.

Thus we ſee what is to be *Granted:* and now I am to ſhew what is *not to be granted*, but to be denied, and, by conſequence from that, what is to be aſſerted and concluded. Though I grant that the Eccleſiaſtical Government of Biſhops is Antient, yet I deny that its Antiquity is that of the *Apoſtolick* Times. This Form of Rule in the Church is not according to the Primitive Pattern, nor did it prevail in the Age of the Apoſtles. Therefore all the Talk of ſome Men about the *Cyprianick Age* and the *Principles* of it is to no purpoſe, unleſs they prove that theſe are conformable to the *Apoſtolick Age* and to the Holy Scripture. I come then to that which is to be Aſſerted and Concluded, to wit, That the Primitive and moſt antient Government of the Church was that of Presbyters. And here I diſtinguiſh between the Times in which our Saviour and

and his Apoſtles lived, and thoſe Times that immediately followed them. In Chriſt's Time the *Apoſtles* and the *ſeventy Diſciples* were the only Miniſters of the Church. Theſe did all Offices belonging to the Evangelical Miniſtry, as it was erected at that time. Then afterwards, when the Church increaſed in the Apoſtles Days, *Deacons* were choſen to take care of the Neceſſitous Members of the Church, and *Presbyters* or *Elders* were appointed to preſide over every Congregation. In *Acts* xi. 30. there is the firſt mention of theſe Eccleſiaſtical Officers; and afterwards we frequently read of them as the only Inſtructors and Governours of the Church, expreſſed ſometimes under other Names, as *Biſhops*, *Paſtors*, &c. This was the Settlement made by the Apoſtles; they ordained and conſtituted *Elders* or *Presbyters* in all Cities and Towns where there was any conſiderable number of Converts to the Chriſtian Religion, to teach and rule the Flock committed to their Charge. Where there were many Converts, ſeveral of theſe Presbyters, with their ſubordinate Deacons, were ſet over the People, and they jointly governed the Churches. No one of theſe Presbyters was above an other, but by common Conſent they took care of the People's Souls. Only they were under the Inſpection and Government of ſome Apoſtle or Apoſtolick Man. This was the State of the Church in the Apoſtles Times. There were no Biſhops at firſt as diſtinct from Presbyters. They were the ſame Perſons, they had the ſame Power, as well as the ſame Names, for *Biſhop* and *Presbyter* were promiſcuouſly uſed.

Again, in the Times a little before the Death of the Apoſtles, and thoſe that immediately ſucceeded, the Church-Government by Presbyters, which had been before appointed by them, ſtill continued. There was no Difference of Authority

or

or Juriſdiction in one more than an other. But becauſe Converts daily increaſed, and Churches multiplied, it was requiſite that the Number of their Teachers and Elders ſhould be increaſed alſo. Whereupon, for the more orderly carrying on of Church-affairs, the Paſtors and Brethren thought fit to make choice of one of their Elders or Presbyters to be the Preſident and Moderator, when they met together about theſe Eccleſiaſtical Matters. The Number, I ſay, of their Teachers increaſing, as the Number of Believers did, there was a Neceſſity of this Appointment, that is, that one of the Elders ſhould be the Chairman or Chief Speaker at their Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies. This was the *Angel* of ſuch a Church, according to the Stile, *Rev.* ii. 1, 8, 12, *&c.* This Government in the Church ſoon after the Times of the Apoſtles is acknowledged by Mr. *Calvin* himſelf, * *Thoſe*, ſaith he, *who were enjoined the Office of Teaching were called Presbyters, who choſe out of their Number in each City one, to whom in an eſpecial manner they gave the Name of Biſhop, leſt Strife and Contention ſhould ariſe from Equality.* † *Beza* aſſerts the ſame, and aſſerts that this kind of *Epiſcopacy* is that which *Ignatius* and other Antient Writers of the Church make mention of. A Primitive Biſhop, in reſpect of the other Clergy, was like a Prolocutor in a Convocation or ſuch like Aſſembly, for the better Convenience of tranſacting Eccleſiaſtical Matters. He thus preſiding over the other Presbyters, had a particular Pre-eminence over them, and there was a peculiar Honour due to him. But this Preſidency, Pre-eminence, and Honour (which was conferred on him by the Conſent of his Fellow-Presbyters) gave him no other *Power* and *Juriſdiction* than what was common to all the reſt of his

* Inſtitut. l. 4. c. 4. ſect. 2. † De triplici genere Epiſcopatûs.

Brethren;

Brethren: and they inſtated him in no other *Order* or *Office*, than what belonged to the Body of Presbyters. He was called *Biſhop* generally, but as to every Thing elſe He and the other Presbyters were equal; they taught and they governed alike. So that there was no *Prelacy* properly ſo called; for this is againſt the Mind of the Holy Spirit in the Writings of the New Teſtament. There was only an orderly Preſidence, which doth not deſtroy the Primitive Parity of Miniſters.

CHAP. XVI.

THIS is the true State of the Caſe. And from the whole we ſee, that the great Sticklers for the Church-Hierarchy have deceived themſelves and others with falſe Repreſentations and Arguments. There is nothing at all (though it looks plauſible) in what that Good Man Mr. *Hooker* ſaith, *We require you to find out but one Church upon the Face of the whole Earth, that hath been ordered by your Diſcipline, or hath not been ordered by ours, that is to ſay, by Epiſcopal Regiment, ſith thence time that the bleſſed Apoſtles were here converſant.* Preface to the Eccleſiaſtical Politie. He need not require us to find out a Church without Biſhops, that is, *Dioceſan Biſhops* (for if that be not his Meaning, he equivocates), for I have abundantly proved that there were no ſuch Biſhops at firſt; and thoſe that we find afterwards were Corruptions of the True *Epiſcopal Regiment*, as he calls it.

Mr. *Chillingworth* pretending to give us *a Demonſtration of the Apoſtolical Inſtitution of Epiſcopacy*, tells us it muſt needs have been received in the Times of the Apoſtles, becauſe it is granted by all Men that it was univerſally received in the Church not

not long after the Apoſtles Times; for between the Apoſtles Times and thoſe ſoon after there was not Time enough for, nor Poſſibility of changing the Government of Presbyters into that of Biſhops: therefore there was no ſuch Alteration, and conſequently Epiſcopacy was of Apoſtolical Inſtitution. But this is ſo far from being a *Demonſtration*, that it is a Sophiſtical way of Arguing, and is much after the rate of that uſed by the Doctors of the Church of *Rome*, who demand of us at what exact Time ſuch and ſuch Opinions and Doctrines, now held by their Church, came into it: And becauſe we do not aſſign the *punctual Seaſon* when they began to obtain in their Church, they thence gather that thoſe Doctrines were always in the *Roman* Church, and were Apoſtolical and Primitive: which is a groſs way of Inference, and condemned by all *Proteſtant* Writers. Such is this I am now ſpeaking of, whereby Mr. *Chillingworth* undertakes to demonſtrate the Apoſtolical Right of *Dioceſan Epiſcopacy*: and the Anſwer to it is that which we generally give to the Papiſts on the former Account, to wit, That oftentimes Doctrines and Opinions, and ſo likewiſe Forms of Eccleſiaſtical Government are introduced into a Church and Society by degrees, by *little and little*, and make no Noiſe, and ſo it is not eaſy, yea it is ſcarce poſſible to tell the preciſe Time when they entered. No Man can exactly define the *juſt Period* between the Time when the Apoſtles left the World, and that Time when the Superiority of Biſhops over Presbyters took place in the Church: but it is unreaſonable thence to conclude that *there was not Time enough* for the Alteration of Presbytery into Epiſcopacy. I have proved that Presbytery was the Government left in the Church by the Apoſtles, and that is ſufficient: and though we were not able to tell the Preciſe Time when it was altered,

yet

yet this cannot hinder us from believing that there was an Alteration. See this in a plain Inſtance, The *certain Time* when Idolatry commenced is not agreed amongſt many of the Learned, they are not ſure who was firſt worſhipped amongſt *Men*, when the Worſhip of the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and *Stars* began, when the Adoration of *Images* had its Riſe. We know that *Adam* was brought up in the True Worſhip of God, and *Methuſelah* received it from *Adam*, and *Shem* had the Knowledge of it from *Methuſelah*; and theſe three filled up the Space of about two thouſand Years; and thus the Knowledge of the True Religion and Worſhip was propagated. Where and when then did Idolatry creep in? Thus it may be argued that there could be no ſuch prodigious Change in Religion. But this arguing is vain and idle, as all the Learned have determined, for it is againſt Matter of Fact. So as to the firſt Riſe of *Epiſcopacy*, grant it to be Obſcure, and that we cannot tell the *particular Time* when the Change was made; yet we cannot thence argue that there never was any other Government in the Chriſtian Church.

But to come cloſer, we are able to aſſign the particular Time when there were plain Eſſays and Forerunners of ſuch an Alteration as this in the Church. Even when Our Saviour was on Earth, the ſame Pride, and Ambition, and Love of Precedency which afterwards ſet up Epiſcopacy, ſhewed themſelves in the very Apoſtles, and ſo far the Government of Biſhops is Apoſtolical: *they diſputed amongſt themſelves who ſhould be greateſt.* Mark ix. 34. *There was a Striſe amongſt them which of them ſhould be accounted the greateſt*, Luke xxii. 24. And afterwards we have an early Inſtance of this Ill Diſpoſition in *Dioſtrephes*, a * Preſ-

* Grot. in loc.

byter

byter of the Church to which *Gaius* belonged; he (as St. *John* informs us, Epiſt. 3. verſe 9.) *loved to have the Pre-eminence*, he affected Superiority and Primacy in the Church; he was impious and Domineering, and was one of the firſt that was ambitious to change Presbytery into Epiſcopacy. Here was the Riſe of that Government, even ſeveral Years before the Firſt Century was expired. It is not ſtrange then that afterwards there were other *Diotrepheſes*, that is, ſuch Perſons as were not contented with Eccleſiaſtical Parity, but aſſumed to themſelves a Superiority: it is no wonder that Biſhops in a ſhort time became the Governours of Churches, eſpecially that after the Apoſtles were gone out of the World, this Change ſpread and increaſed more and more. And what elſe can we look for, when we are informed from Eccleſiaſtical Records that there was betimes a great Change even in the firſt Chriſtian Churches as to ſundry Things relating to Doctrine and Practice. We are expreſsly told by *Hegeſippus* that in the firſt Century, * *as ſoon as* the *Sacred Company of the Apoſtles was gone off, deteſtable Errors, through the Deceit of thoſe that delivered ſtrange Doctrines, took rooting in the Church, which before had been a Pure Virgin.* The Divinity of Chriſt was denied by the *Ebionites*, for the Confutation of which Hereſy St. *John* writ his Goſpel. The Humanity of Our Saviour was denied by the *Gnoſticks* and *Marcionites*. His Paſſion and Death were held not to be Real, but Seeming only, by the *Baſilidians* and *Saturnilians*. The *Nicolaitans* and *Menandrians* taught very pernicious and ſcandalous Doctrines. In ſo ſhort a Time after the Deceaſe of the Apoſtles was there this Corruption in the Church, and much more that I could mention. The Doctrine of the *Chiliaſts*, who held

* Apud Euſeb. lib. 3. chap. 29.

that

that the Saints ſhould reign with Chriſt perſonally on Earth a thouſand Years after the Reſurrection, came into the Church in the Beginning of the 2d Century, and was univerſally entertained for three hundred Years at leaſt. It had great Vouchers, and was taken up from *Papias*, who converſed with thoſe that were contemporary with the Apoſtles. If this Error came in immediately after the Apoſtles Days, why might not *Epiſcopacy* take place ſo too? And then what becomes of Mr. *Chillingworth*'s Suggeſtions that there was not Time enough to make ſuch a Change, and conſequently that there was no Change at all? Why might not this Government be brought into the Church ſoon after the Apoſtles Times, as well as the Opinion of the *Millenaries*?

But Mr. *Chillingworth* and his Friends tell us, that though there was a Change in Doctrines in a very ſhort Time, yet it is not poſſible that the Eccleſiaſtick Government ſhould have a New Face ſo ſoon. But this, like the reſt of his Notions, is groundleſs, and hath no Foundation at all; for if there were ſo early Corruptions in Doctrine, we may with good Reaſon conclude that there were Alterations in the Church-Government, there being greater Temptations to this than to that. Yea, there was no Worldly Temptation to invite Men to deny Chriſt's Divinity or Humanity, and to vent the like Opinions: but there was Worldly Intereſt to influence upon thoſe who brought in a Change in Government; for they mended their Secular Circumſtances by it, that is, they appeared in a greater Figure, and thought they were more honoured and reſpected than when they were bare Presbyters. Some Deſigning Men, who liked not the Equality of the Clergy, but aſpired to Worldly Greatneſs, ſet up this Scheme, and proclaimed it to be Apoſtolical, yea, to be enjoined by the Apoſtles themſelves; as *Papias* affirmed that the *Mil-*

lennium was delivered by St. *John* the Apoſtle and Evangeliſt.

Again, That there ſhould be a Change of *Doctrine*, is more harſh and improbable than a Change in the *Government of the Church*: for the Doctrines about Chriſt's Divine and Human Nature were the very Subſtance of Chriſtianity, and they were expreſsly ſet down in Scripture, and there inculcated over and over again; and they were confirmed by plain Matter of Fact, and therefore they muſt be ſtrangely deluded who denied theſe Articles of the Chriſtian Religion. Whence it is rational to infer that a Change in Church-Government was more likely and probable than in ſuch Doctrines as thoſe which were of that vaſt Importance. Thus it is manifeſt that *Mr. Chillingworth's Demonſtration of Epiſcopacy* (as he ſtiles it) hath nothing of Solidity in it: For it is eaſy and rational to believe there was a Defection in a Short Time from that Form of Church-government which was in the Apoſtles Times, and that the Unſcriptural Epiſcopacy prevailed in many Churches. There is no Neceſſity of aſſigning the very exact Epocha of it (though I have attempted That): If we do but conſult Human Nature, and the Propenſions of Mankind, we may ſatisfy our ſelves how eaſily and ſpeedily ſome Ambitious Clergymen in thoſe Times, which then grew Degenerate, challenged to themſelves a Preeminence above the reſt of their Brethren, and being greedy of Honour and Dominion, turned Presbytery into Epiſcopacy.

So for Dr. *Beveridge*'s * Arguments for *Epiſcopacy* in the Apoſtles Times, they ſignify nothing now, becauſe the Times are altered as to the *Perſecution of Chriſtians*; and beſides, there was no Chriſtian Magiſtrates then, as now there are; and the

* Cod. Can. Eccl. Prim. Vindic. lib. 2. cap. 11.

Chriſtians

Chriſtians were at that Time few, but now many; and on other Accounts the Scene of Things is changed: And therefore though * one is pleaſed to ſay of this Learned Author, that *he hath got a Faculty above all other Men of making Things diſtinct and plain*, yet in this Caſe he and his Vouchers are much miſtaken.

The Party cry up *Dr. Maurice's Defence of Dioceſan Epiſcopacy* as a wonderful Performance, but the True Character of it is, that it is all Trick and Evaſion. In this Piece we may ſee that one of Fertile Fancy hath ſomething to ſay for every thing he pleaſes to maintain. Certainly never Man ſtrained ſo egregiouſly as he hath done. He moſt laviſhly exerciſes his Invention in ſtarting new and unheard of Replies to what is offered to him. He heaps Anſwers one upon an other, as if he thought to prevail by the bare Number of them: But it is obſervable all along in this Author that he delights to make his Anſwers contradict one an other.

I might take notice of the Management of an † other Learned Writer, and ſhew how he vilifies the *Holy* and *Inſpired Writings* of the New Teſtament, and repreſents them as precarious and ſuppoſititious, and filled with Miſtakes and Contradictions, and how he deſignedly makes the *Canon* of Scripture uncertain and doubtful, in order to the eſtabliſhing of *Epiſcopacy*. And it were not a difficult Task to ſhew that there are in *the Vindication of the Principles of the Cyprianick Age* a great many forced and diſtorted Quotations out of Antient and Modern Authors, eſpecially the latter, for *Epiſcopacy* in his Acception of it.

We ſee how vainly and extravagantly they extoll this Government who tell us that it hath the ſame

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* Mr. *Dawſon*'s Original of Laws.

† Mr. *Dodwell* in his firſt Diſſertation on *Irenæus*.

Foundation that *Infants Baptiſm* hath, and that there is more to be ſaid for it from the Apoſtles Writings than for the Obſervation of *the Lords Day*; yea, and that * *there are diverſe weighty Points of Faith that have not ſo ſtrong Evidence in Scripture as Epiſcopacy hath.* And it is obſervable that he who ſaid this was ſtrangely Tranſported with the Cauſe he defended. He who paſſed for a very mild and placid ſort of Man, was more fierce and rampant than any of thoſe others that writ for Epiſcopacy. His uſual Stile was altered, and his Paſſion gave a Tincture to all he ſaid. The wonderful Adoration which a later Writer pays to this Species of Eccleſiaſtical Government makes him proclaim in one of his Rehearſals, *There is as great Evidence for Epiſcopacy as for the Canon of the Holy Scriptures, or the Articles of the Creed*, yea, *the Evidence is ſtronger for Epiſcopacy*; and again he adds, *it is ſtronger than for the Faith and Doctrine of Chriſt.* Here is a high Rant: there is more to be ſaid for *Epiſcopacy* than for *Chriſtianity* itſelf. He is ready to part with the Bible rather than the Biſhops. He tells us farther, that *Epiſcopacy is all in all*, where there is that, there is all True Doctrine, all Order, and all Religion flouriſhes there; as we ſee in the Churches of the *Roman* Perſuaſion, where there are about a thouſand Archbiſhops and Biſhops: But look into the *Reformed* Churches where there are no Biſhops, and there you find nothing but Sects and Hereſies, and Diſorder, but no Religion. So the *Armenian*, *Georgian*, and *Jacobite* Churches have Biſhops over them, and ſo have the *Muſcovites*, which makes them ſuch excellent Chriſtians, and free from Corruptions. Thus we ſee what precious Thoughts the Modern Notion of Epiſcopacy inſpires ſome Mens Minds with. Whereas if they were free from Prejudice and Paſſion, they might

* Biſhop *Hall*'s Epiſcopacy by Divine Right.

plainly

plainly ſee that the Exerciſe of the Epiſcopal Power (as it is uſed now) is an Uſurpation in the Church, and that the Model I have preſented is not only Apoſtolical, but in itſelf moſt ſuitable and congruous. For this is a Middle Way between *Popular Parity* and *Prelacy*; between the Democratical Government of the Church, wherein the People do all, and the Sovereignty of Single Biſhops, in whom all Miniſterial Power is lodged. Here is a mixed Regiment of Preaching and Ruling Elders; here is ſuch a *Preſidency* of *Paſtors* as deſtroys not an *Equality*, and introduces not a *Diſtinct Order* of Miniſters. This is the Antient, Primitive, and Moderate Epiſcopacy: it is the governing of the Churches by Presbyters, and ſome particular Members ſet over them as Preſidents and Moderators. Call theſe Presbyter-Biſhops or Chief Presbyters, as you think fit: only know and be perſuaded of this, that this is the beſt tempered Government, and brings in and maintains a due *Balance* in the Church: for a *Balance* here, as well as in the State, is deſirable and neceſſary. This happy Poize and Commixture will prevent all Popular Diſorder on the one hand, and all exorbitant Ambition and Affectation of Superiority on the other.

There are ſome dark Footſteps yet remaining amongſt us of this *Priſtine Moderation* and *Mixed Rule* in the Church. The *Chapter* belonging to Cathedrals is a kind of aping the Antient *Presbytery*. And they ſhew us now at this Day the *Biſhops* and the *Prebendaries Houſes* ſtanding near one an other; which is all that is to be ſeen of Affinity and Correſpondence between the Biſhops and Presbyters. But it tells us that the *Biſhops of England* did antiently tranſact all Things with the Counſel and Conſent of their *Presbyters*. Thus there is a *Shadow* remaining of the *Primitive Epiſcopacy* (for we ſpeak not againſt Epiſcopacy, but we mean ſuch Epiſco-

pacy as the Scripture ſpeaks of) Providence may in time reſtore the *Subſtance* to us. 'Till then let us be contented with the Eccleſiaſtical Government which we have, and which the Laws of the Land have ſettled among us. And let me ſay this in the Cloſe, Though there be many Deficiencies and Flaws in the Conſtitution itſelf, yet there are many more in the Officers. The Office itſelf is not ſo much to be found fault with as the Perſons that are employed in it, who generally execute it either Careleſsly, or Partially, or too Rigorouſly, and pervert the Ends of the Office and Conſtitution.

A BRIEF

CONFUTATION

Of Theſe Two

Falſe and Dangerous Poſitions;

NAMELY,

I. That the Church of ROME is a True Church, and conſequently that Salvation may be attained in it.

II. That the Miniſters of the Goſpel are True and Proper Prieſts, and have their True and Proper Sacrifice and Altar now on Earth.



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THE PREFACE.

I Think I need not trouble the Reader with an *Apology* for the enſuing Performance, which ſtrikes at *Popery*, when I remind him of this, that it is high time for us to be upon our Guard, when the *Romaniſts* ſeem to break in upon us by Favour of ſome Writers of our own *Proteſtant* Communion: * One of them juſtifies the *Northern Rebellion* in King *Henry* the VIIIth's Reign, which was occaſioned by the Diſſolution of the Abbies: he doth not well approve of the *Changes in Religion* in thoſe Times. He makes that King get the better of *Luther* in his Book that he writ againſt him in *Defenſe of the Seven Sacraments*. He takes the part of the Order of *Monks* and *Friers*, and diſlikes thoſe who cen-

* Mr. *Collier*, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Great Britain.

ſure

ſure their Behaviour. The firſt Book of Common Prayer in King *Edward* the VIth's Reign, wherein were enjoined *Exorciſms*, and *Anointing at Baptiſm* and at *Confirmation*, and *Praying for the Dead*, is preferred by him before the Second Edition of the Common Prayer, where theſe Things are left out. He loves to contradict Mr. *Fox the Martyrologiſt*, and *Biſhop Burnet*. He defends the Uſefulneſs of *Images in Churches*, and finds fault with the Reaſons of the Biſhops againſt them. Where any thing is ſaid in favour of the Church of *Rome* and its Uſages, he ſets it down at length; but the Arguments againſt thoſe Superſtitious Uſages are generally contracted and abbreviated. He is very Partial in his Characters of Papiſts and Proteſtants, and very often lets us know that he hath a greater Eſteem of the Former than of the Latter. He all along ſpeaks favourably of the Popiſh Superſtitions, as *Croſſing*, *Anointing*, *Auricular Confeſſion*, *Invocating the Deceaſed*, *Sacrificing*, &c. though this is an arraigning of the *Reformation*, a condemning of the *Proteſtant Religion*, and a Defiance to the *Church of England* as by Law eſtabliſhed.

There are ſeveral other Writers of late, who have openly aſſerted and defended *Praying to* and *for the Dead*, *uſing Chriſm at Confirmation*, *the Abſolute Neceſſity of Sacerdotal Abſolution*; they hold the *Sacrament of the Euchariſt to be a Proper Sacrifice*, and the Miniſters of the Goſpel *Proper Prieſts*, and the *Communion-Table an Altar ſtrictly and properly ſo called*: and this *Sacrifice is Propitiatory*

tory for the Quick and the Dead. Eſpecially, this Notion of a *Chriſtian Sacrifice* doth wonderfully poſſeſs the Minds of ſome of our Divines of late, and their Writings ſwarm with it: and it is come into the Publick Schools, and hath been propounded there as a very Orthodox Theſis. We underſtand by this what one meant when he ſaid, *Theſe are the Elect who cry Day and Night for a Convocation*, hoping that theſe Doctrines and ſome others that they liked would be eſtabliſhed by that Venerable Aſſembly.

Now, I fear that That Notion, which hath ſo long prevailed among us, of the *Church of Rome's being a True Church*, and that *Perſons may be Saved in it*, hath mightily influenced the Perſons that have lately appeared in defence of the forementioned Sacerdotal Sacrifice, and of ſome other Tenets of the Church of *Rome*: For if That Doctrine be Orthodox, then it is to no purpoſe to contend for the *Proteſtant Religion* in oppoſition to that of *Rome*; for what would a Man deſire more than to be of the *True Church*, and to be ſaved? It was rightly ſaid by that famous * Divine of the Reformed *French* Church, "If the Proteſtants did but once believe that the Church of *Rome* is the *True Church*, they would immediately join themſelves with it; ſo that for the future there would be no Diſpute and Difference between us and that Church". Which may convince us of what mighty Importance it is to underſtand this Matter aright, and in order to that

* *Daillé* of the right Uſe of the Fathers, *book.* 2. *chap.* 6.

how

how Rational and Seaſonable an Attempt it is thoroughly to enquire and examine whether the Church of *Rome* be a True Church, and ſuch as is attended with the Salvation of thoſe that embrace it. With which I will join this Query which is more particular; Whether there be Proper Prieſts, Sacrifices and Altars now under the Chriſtian and Evangelical Diſpenſation.

I doubt not but I ſhall make it evident that the *Negative* in theſe Queries is the Part that we are to take, though the Affirmative of the Former of them hath had the Honour to be allowed of by ſome of thoſe Writers who have been adorned with all the Excellencies that one would deſire in any Perſon, excepting better Sentiments about This Matter; and though the latter hath been vouched by ſome that have been as able as any Men to maintain a bad Cauſe. And I queſtion not but I ſhall convince the Impartial and Judicious Reader that Their Cauſe is ſuch, and that they have not rightly laid and concerted their Buſineſs to their own Advantage, but that they have put us off with Tumultuous and Confuſed Thoughts, with Inconſequent Reaſonings, with Diſtortions of Scripture, with Chimerical Fancies, and Utopian Fictions.

It hath been my Perſuaſion, and remains ſo ſtill, that *ſome* of theſe Men are a ſort of Allies and Confederates of the Church of *Rome*, and that they are Under-workmen (whether they deſign it or not) to the Jeſuites, who are Buſy every where. Their Opinion of a *Propitiatory Sacrifice in the Euchariſt* came from *Rome*, and

and will lead thither. If they go on thus, we ſhall have more *Engliſh* Advocates for the *Roman* Cauſe, more *Hardings*, *Parſons's*, and *Campians*, and we ſhall ſoon have *Rome* within our Bowels. Wherefore it is of the laſt Importance that thoſe who are ſincere Lovers of the Proteſtant and Reformed Religion ſhew themſelves concerned at ſuch a Juncture as This, and freely Remonſtrate againſt theſe Men who are introducing the Sacrifice of the Maſs, and may in time (if not prevented) be *Sacrificing Prieſts* in the worſt Senſe. For my part, I reckon it to be my Indiſpenſible Duty to appear againſt this Growing Miſchief; and I am glad to ſee that ſome of our Learnedeſt Prelates have thought it to be Theirs, and accordingly have publickly ſtruck at this Vile and Dangerous Opinion. And as to the Other, I hope ſome of the ſame Sacred Order will ſhew their Diſlike of it, eſpecially when they obſerve that ſome among us entertain a favourable Opinion of the Church of *Rome* and its Doctrines. In ſome late Writings *Popery* hath put on an other Face than what it had; it is dreſſed up in a plauſible Garb; a falſe Account, a wrong Character is given of it. But this is that which will ruine us, for hereby we do in part favour the Adverſary, and join with him. This is evident in the preſent Caſe: We are loth to *unchurch* the *Romaniſts*, and accordingly we are induced to think well of ſome of their Doctrines. But if we intend in good earneſt to hold faſt our Religion, we muſt not act thus, we muſt not palliate and mitigate their Errors, but ſhew our ſelves

ſelves Hearty and Impartial in oppoſing and rejecting them.

I hope I have ſaid *enough* in the following Papers to prove my Point; and though ſome of my Readers may think I have ſaid *too much*, yet I hope when they have concocted their Prejudices, they will own that all that I have ſaid is *no more* than what the Merits of the Cauſe required. I am inclined to believe that they will think I have apprehended aright concerning the Preſent Matter, and that I have paſſed a True Judgement on it, notwithſtanding the furious Aſſaults of ſome Bigotted Writers in this degenerate Age, wherein *Proteſtantiſm* ſeems to lie drooping, and even expiring its laſt Breath.

OF



OF THE
First POSITION
Held by ſome of our Divines;

Namely, *That the Church of ROME is a True Church, and that Salvation is to be attained in it.*

THIS Poſition gives me Occaſion to enquire Impartially into theſe Two Things: 1ſt, Whether the Church of *Rome* be a True Church; 2ly, Whether we can be ſaved in it.

I begin with the Firſt. It cannot be denied that the Church of *Rome* hath been heretofore granted to be a *True Church* by many *Proteſtants* of conſiderable Note; even by *Luther* himſelf, if Dr. *Field* hath quoted him right; yea and by *Calvin*, *Bucer*, *Beza*, *Morney*. But we muſt know that their Meaning was no more than *this*, that the Church of *Rome* held and profeſſed many Articles of the True Religion, and in that bare reſpect was a *True Church*. So that this cannot be taken as a Teſtimony of their aſſerting the *Abſolute Truth of the Roman Church:* yea, it is plain from what theſe Great

Great Men have maintained, that they thought otherwiſe.

Among our own Divines, Mr. *Hooker* and ſome others held that the Church of *Rome* is a True Church. The ſame is ſaid by Archbiſhop *Laud* in his *Conference with Fiſher*. And he defends it in his *Anſwers* to his *Charge* at his *Trial*. That which he grounds his Aſſertion upon is this, That the Church of *Rome* holds all the Fundamentals of the Chriſtian Religion. Dr. *Stillingfleet* eſpouſes his Lordſhip's Opinion, and in his *Vindication* of his *Conference*, and in his *Defence againſt T. G.* he expreſsly ſaith of the Church of *Rome*, that *it holds all the Eſſential Points of the Chriſtian Faith*, and therefore is a *True Church*. Many other Learned Writers of our Church have adopted this Notion. This is owned by * Biſhop *Burnet:* And † Dr. *Jackſon* had, before this, laboured to make it out, and he fled to Maxims of Civil Law to that End, though little to the purpoſe. Mr. *Chillingworth* hath told us, that the Church of *Rome* in a charitable Conſtruction may paſs for a *True Church*.

But there is no Ground for this favourable Opinion; and therefore others have rejected it, and with good reaſon. The Church of *Rome* is no true Church, ſay thoſe excellent Writers *Zanchy* and *Cameron*. And among our own, Biſhop *Jewell* ſaith as much, § "We have departed from that "Church (ſaith he) in which there was nothing re- "maining entire and ſound, nothing that was like "a Church". And in his *Apology for the Church of England* and his *Defenſe* of it, he aſſerts that *the Church of Rome is not the true and right inſtructed Church of God*, and grounds the *Departure of our Church from it* on this very Bottom. It is well known that the Learned *Whitaker* and *Perkins* ex-

* Remarks on the Methods for converting Proteſtants. *p.* 104.
† Vol. 3. Book 12. Chap. 18. § Apol. Lat. p. 191.

preſsly

preſsly deny the *Roman* Church to be a True one. And hear what were the firſt and pure and diſintereſted Thoughts of a Great Man, * "The *Roman* "Church (ſaith he) though ſhe owns her ſelf for "a Church, yet ceaſes to be a true Church, be- "cauſe of her Univerſal Corruption as to the "Word and Sacraments". He had before ſaid, *The Church of Rome holds all the Eſſential Points of the Chriſtian Faith*; and in an † other Place he attempted to palliate the Matter thus, to maintain the Archbiſhop's Credit: "A Church may be a "*True Church* in one Senſe, though an *Erroneous* "*Church* in an other: *True*, as there is a Poſſibility "of Salvation in it; *Erroneous*, as delivering that "for Truth which is not ſo". So great a Change was made in this Learned Man's Judgement (if I may call it his Judgement) in two or three Years time. But if we conſider the Occaſion of this Alteration, we may be enclined to believe that his Firſt Sentiments were beſt, when he declared that *the Church of Rome ceaſes to be a True Church, becauſe of her Univerſal Corruption.* The Learned Dr. *Barlow*, late Biſhop of *Lincoln* is Poſitive, *The Pope and his Adherents, Clergy and Laity, who acknowledge him Chriſt's Vicar, and Supream Head of the whole Chriſtian Church, who believe and profeſs the whole Doctrine of the Roman Church, and practiſe the ſuperſtitious and idolatrous ways of Worſhip approved and received by that Church, theſe are no True Church of God, but an Idolatrous and Antichriſtian Synagogue.* So he in his Letter to the Earl of *Angleſey.*

Next, let us attend to what *Our Church her ſelf* hath delivered on this Point, in the 2d Part of the *Homily* for *Whitſunday*: "The *True Church* (ſaith "ſhe) hath always three Notes or Marks, whereby "it is known, Pure and Sound Doctrine, the Sa-

* Stillingf. Iren. part 1. cap. 7.
† Rational Account of the Proteſtant Religion, part 2. chap. 1.

" craments Miniſtered according to Chriſt's Holy " Inſtitution, and the Right Uſe of Eccleſiaſtical " Diſcipline. This Deſcription of the Church is " agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and alſo " to the Doctrine of the Antient Fathers, ſo that " none may juſtly find fault therewith. Now, if " you will compare this with the *Church of Rome*, " not as it was in the Beginning, but as it is at " preſent, and hath been for the Space of nine " hundred Years and odd, you ſhall well perceive " the State thereof to be ſo far wide from *the Na-* " *ture of the Church*, that nothing can be more". And it is further ſhewed in the ſame Place, that the Church of *Rome*, as to the ſeveral Particulars which in the foreſaid Deſcription conſtitute a True Church, is defective, namely, as to True Doctrine, the Right Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and the Exerciſe of the Power of the Keys. And we know what our Church ſaith in her 19th Article, where ſhe gives this Definition of the True Chriſtian *Church: It is a Congregation of faithful Men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly adminiſtered according to Chriſt's Ordinance.* Neither of which Qualifications are to be found in the Church of *Rome*; the Word of God is not purely preached, nor the Sacraments duly adminiſtered there, as the Articles of our Church plainly charge them.

We ſee then what is the Senſe and Determination of the *Church of England*; if we value her Judgement we muſt not own the *Church of Rome* to be a *True Church*. And by the way we may obſerve that thoſe among us who declare themſelves to be of the contrary Perſuaſion, forget *what Church* they are of, and pretend to adhere to. They entitle themſelves Sons of the *Church* of *England*, but they ſwerve from the profeſſed Doctrine of their Mother. One would think that this Article alone of our Church ſhould be ſufficient to decide the Point we are now upon,

upon, especially with our Clergy, who have all of them subscribed to this Article, which tells us what is the Notion of a *Church*, and what it is that constitutes a *true Church*.

And with the *Church* of *England* agrees that of *Ireland*, as will appear from the Judgement of their Archbishops and Bishops in the Year 1626, when the *Toleration of Popery* was attempted in *Ireland*. Then this Protestation was made by them; "The "Religion of the Papists is Superstitious and Idola- "trous; their Faith and Doctrine Erroneous and "Heretical; their Church in respect of both, Apo- "statical. To give them therefore a Toleration, "or to consent that they may freely exercise their "Religion, and profess their Faith and Doctrine, "is a Grievous Sin, and that in two respects: "For, 1st, It is to make our selves accessory, not "only to their Superstitions, Idolatries, Heresies, "and in a word, to all the Abominations of Pope- "ry; but also (which is a consequent of the former) "to the Perdition of the Seduced People, which "perish in the Deluge of the Catholick Apostasy. "2ly, To grant them Toleration in respect of any "Money to be given, or Contribution to be made "by them, is to set Religion to Sale, and with it "the Souls of the People which Christ our Saviour "hath redeemed with his most precious Blood. "And as it is a great Sin, so also a Matter of most "Dangerous Consequence. The Consideration "whereof we commend to the Wise and Judicious, "beseeching the Jealous God of Truth to make "them who are in Authority, Zealous of God's "Glory, and of the Advancement of True Religion; "and Zealous, Resolute and Couragious against "all Popery, Superstition, and Idolatry. Amen".

This was unanimously subscribed by the Archbishops and Bishops, *November* 26. in the Year before mentioned, as it is set down in *Archbishop Usher's Life and Death* by Dr. *Bernard* in his *Funeral Sermon*.

Sermon. And can we think that theſe Prelates thought the Church of *Rome* to be a *True Church?* Can we imagine that they entertained ſuch an Opinion, when they declared the Church of *Rome* to be *Heretical* and *Idolatrous*, and that the tolerating of it is a Great and Grievous Sin, and ſuch as is accompanied with the Perdition and Deſtruction of Mens Souls? And this without doubt would have been the Sentiment of all the ſucceeding Biſhops and Clergy, if their Compliance with the Notions which were afterwards ſtarted, and in a manner impoſed upon them, had not been too haſty: and at laſt by degrees it became a Faſhionable Opinion, that the Church of *Rome* is a true Church. However, we ſee from what has been before produced that this Opinion is not univerſally received: and I was glad to ſee this Paſſage in a late Letter writ by the Divines of *Brunſwick*, met in Conſiſtory, to the Duke of *Brunſwick*, upon their being informed that he intended to change his Religion, and embrace Popery: They ſay thus; *The Romiſh Church raiſes the Doctrines of Men above the Precepts of Jeſus Chriſt: the Merit of his Blood ſhed for us is looked upon as inſufficient to procure our Salvation: All the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith have been entirely overthrown and corrupted by them.* Thus we ſee there are ſome Honeſt and Plain Vouchers of Truth.

This then is the Thing which I will now undertake to make good, that The Church of *Rome* cannot with any Reaſon pretend to be a *True Church.* For though many Marks and Characters of ſuch a one, namely, Antiquity, Succeſſion, Unity, Univerſality, are given by *Bellarmine* and others, yet upon Examination we find that theſe are not to be depended upon: but the *Certain* and *Sure Marks* of a True Church are the *True Faith* and *True Worſhip.* Where theſe are, there is the *True Church*; and where theſe are wanting, there is *no True Church.*

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The first Mark of the True Church is sound Doctrine: for we are ascertained that the Church is *the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.* 1 Tim. iii. 15. It holds it forth, and it holds it up, as those Terms in the Original signify. It is a certain and infallible Token of the True Church, that it maintains the Faith once delivered to the Saints, that it keeps the Truths of the Gospel entire, and admits of no Errours that touch the Foundation of Christianity. Now the Church of *Rome* fails in this; for She not only upholds and maintains false Doctrine, but even denies the Fundamentals of Christianity, and renounces the very Substance of the Christian Faith.

I know this is not granted by the Generality of our Divines, yea, they peremptorily assert the contrary, and tell us that All the Essential Articles of Faith are owned by the Church of *Rome*, and that the Church of *Rome* believes all that *we* believe, because they own the *three Creeds* as we do. * *That the Church of Rome and Protestant Churches differ not in Fundamentals*, was Archbishop *Laud*'s Opinion. "Our only Controversy with the Church "of *Rome* is about *Negative Articles*", saith Doctor *Sherlock*; and others hold with him. † "It is not "denied (saith an other great Writer of our Church) "by the most Judicious Protestants, but that the "Church of *Rome* holds all the Articles of the "Christian Faith which are necessary to Salvation. "But that which we charge upon them is the Im-"posing of New Doctrines and Practices upon "Christians as necessary to Salvation, which were "never taught by our Saviour and his Apostles". He grants that the Papists have a good and sound Foundation, only their Superstructure is ill. They own all that is necessary to Man's Salvation, and

* History of Troubles and Tryal of the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, *p.* 391.

† Dr. *Tillotson*'s Sermon on the Hazard of being saved in the Church of *Rome*.

that makes a True Church: and as for their *Hay* and *Stubble*, theſe do not unchurch them.

But this is not the Right way of Dealing with the Church of *Rome*. If we will approve ourſelves true and faithful to the *Proteſtant* Cauſe, we muſt go higher than this, we muſt charge Papiſts with holding thoſe Doctrines that are contradictory to the Fundamental, Eſſential, and Neceſſary Articles of Religion. Which I prove thus: It is a Neceſſary and Eſſential Article of Religion that God only is to be worſhipped: But the Church of *Rome* aſſerts and maintains that Image-worſhip, and worſhiping of Saints and Angels, and of the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament is lawful, and conſequently She renounces that Fundamental Article, That *we are to worſhip the True God, and Him alone*; for any one may plainly ſee that we cannot worſhip the True God only, and yet pay Adoration to Creatures, as Saints and Angels and the Elements in the Euchariſt before mentioned. Who then can ſay that all the Neceſſary and Eſſential Articles of Faith are owned by the Church of *Rome?*

To be ſaved by Chriſt's Merits only, is an other Fundamental Article; but Papiſts contend for their own Merits, and the Merits of the Saints. Now, if we are able to merit, Chriſt's Merits are to no purpoſe, for He merited for us becauſe we cannot. So that this Popiſh Doctrine deſtroys the whole Syſtem of the Goſpel and the Work of our Redemption, which entirely depends on the Meritorious Undertakings of our Saviour, as Our Church hath taught us in her 11th Article, *We are accounted* (ſaith ſhe) *righteous before God, only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt by Faith, and not for our own Works and Deſervings.*

That none can *make Satisfaction* for our Sins but Chriſt, is an other Eſſential Truth, but the Romaniſts require our own Satisfaction as neceſſary, and thereby annull the Satisfaction of Chriſt; for

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if we can by our own Works satisfy for ourselves, then the Satisfaction of Christ is needless and superfluous. So that the Popish Tenet of *Satisfaction* destroys one of the chiefest Fundamentals of Christianity.

That the Satisfaction which our Saviour made on the Cross was *Perfect*, is an other Evangelical Doctrine necessary to be believed by us; but the Papists hold that an other Sacrifice besides that on the Cross is requisite to be offered up daily.

It is an Essential Article that Christ is our only *Advocate* and *Mediator*; but the Church of *Rome* holds other Mediators and Advocates, and thereby takes away the All-sufficient Mediatorship of Christ.

Who can say that the Papists and the Protestants differ not in Fundamentals, when the former maintain that the *Saints are to be prayed to*, and the latter profess that God alone is to be prayed to?

It is a Necessary Article that Christ personally ascended into Heaven, and that *the Heavens must receive him 'till the Time of the Restitution of all Things*: but the Church of *Rome* asserts that Christ's Body is now here on Earth, and in ten thousand Places at once. Thus the Romanists do not hold all the Articles of the Christian Faith which are of the Foundation, and are necessary to Salvation.

Again, who can say otherwise when it is so evident that these Men deny the *Offices of Christ?*

As first, his *Kingly* Office is supplanted by them by making the Pope the Sovereign and Infallible Head of all the Churches in Christendom, and allowing him to usurp that Power which Christ himself only hath.

Secondly, The *Priestly* Office is apparently nulled and frustrated by the pretended Offering up of Christ in the Mass as a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead (which I shall speak of afterwards); by making Satisfaction for Sins, by our own Works and Merits, and by setting up other

Mediators and Interceſſors beſide Chriſt, which I mentioned before.

Thirdly, The *Prophetick* Office of Chriſt is oppoſed and ſubverted by the Church of *Rome*, by their Miſinterpreting and Corrupting the Holy Scriptures, yea, and by not ſuffering the People to conſult theſe Sacred Oracles, which are the only Rule of our Faith and good Living.

Thus we ſee how groundleſsly it is aſſerted by our Divines, that the Church of *Rome* profeſſes all the Doctrines of the Chriſtian Faith which are Neceſſary to Salvation, and are Eſſential to Chriſtianity. And from what hath been ſaid, it is manifeſt, that though the Papiſts profeſs the Belief of all the *Articles of the Creed*, yet this is a ſeeming Belief only: For they hold *others* that are *Deſtructive* of that Belief. Though they pretend to hold the Fundamental Doctrines of Faith, yet they make ſuch *Additions* to them, as neceſſarily and by plain Conſequence *overthrow* theſe Fundamental Articles.

This is the true Caſe, and accordingly we ſhall not injure them if we ſay that they endeavour to *lay an other Foundation than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*. By maintaining thoſe Things which claſh with his Regal, Sacerdotal, and Prophetick Offices, they raſe the very Fundamentals of the Chriſtian Religion.

This is ſo clear a Truth, that even thoſe who have been thought to have been enclined to the other Opinion, have freely confeſſed it; as I have lately found in the Author of the firſt Tract in the *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ*, publiſhed by Dr. *Hicks*; for he expreſsly owns, that *the Church of Rome grew at Length ſo Licentious in her Corruptions, as even to ſubvert the Fundamentals of Religion*. The Publiſher of this Treatiſe tells us not his Name, but vouches him to have been *entirely*

tirely of the Church of England *. I was very much pleased to read this, when I knew that the Editor of this Discourse is of an other Opinion himself, so that I look upon the above-cited Acknowledgement concerning the *Roman* Church, as a Truth unawares published to the World, by one that was no Friend to it, but yet providentially brought it to Light, and bore Testimony to it even against his Will.

It is observable, how an † other faulters most egregiously, and flatly contradicts himself. *It must be supposed*, saith he, *that both the Papists and all the Sorts of Protestants do profess the same true Religion in Substance*, and consequently the Church of *Rome*, as well as that of the *Protestants*, is a True Church. And yet he had said before, *Part* 2. *All the particular Doctrines of the Church of Rome, which are worth disputing, are either absolutely false, or forbidden in Scripture, or not contained in it.* Which must certainly make the Doctrines aud Religion of the Church of *Rome* a False Religion, and the Church a False Church. He further saith, That *Popery is in its own Nature damnable*; and he saith *he hath sufficiently proved it*, Part 3. Chap. 5. But is *Popery* in its own Nature *Damnable*, and yet is it the *True Religion*, and is the Church of *Rome*, which is in a damned State, the True Church? Such Contradictions as these our Author is pleased to admit of, meerly because he is loth to confess in express Terms, that the Church of *Rome* is not a *True Church*, though in Effect he owns as much.

There is an other that hath lately baffled himself in this very Point. He holds the *Roman Church* to be a || *True Church*; for, saith he, § *Nothing is*

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* Preface to the Reader.

† Mr. *Bennet*. Confutat. of Popery. *Part* 3.

|| Mr. *Lewis*'s Examination of the Rights, *&c.* pag. 372, 445.

§ Pag. 374.

sufficient

ſufficient to Unchurch any Society of Chriſtians, but Apoſtacy from Chriſtianity, and renouncing Jeſus Chriſt. A Chriſtian Church may be very Corrupt, it may be Heretical, Idolatrous, and Schiſmatical, and yet not apoſtatize from all Chriſtianity, it may ſtill hold the Eſſential Truths of Chriſtianity. So that according to this Writer, though the Church of *Rome* ſhould be proved to be Heretical, Idolatrous, and Schiſmatical, yet ſtill it holds the Eſſential Truths of Chriſtianity, and therefore remains a True Church. This, I believe, will be thought by all ſober Men to be ſtrange Doctrine. Yet, however, let us take Notice how this Writer contradicts himſelf; for, ſpeaking of our ſeparating from the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, and the Grounds of it, he ſaith, * *When the Vital and Eſſential Parts of a Church's Worship are corrupted,* (meaning the Church of *Rome*) *all Churches and Chriſtians are obliged to abſtain from its Communion,* becauſe then it is no longer a True Church; for if its *Vitals* and *Eſſentials* are corrupted, it deſerves not the Name of a Church: And yet this Gentleman had acquainted us before, that the Church of *Rome holds the Eſſential Truths of Chriſtianity*, and therefore is *not Unchurched.* And it is obſervable, that whereas he had declared it to be his Judgement that a Church may be Heretical and Schiſmatical, and yet be a True Church; yet in the ſame Treatiſe he deſcribes the True Church to be † *one viſible Body on Earth, comprehending all the Profeſſors of Chriſt's Name who retain the Purity of the Faith, in Oppoſition to all Hereticks and Schiſmaticks.* Now here he owns that there cannot be a True Church without the PURITY OF THE FAITH, for he makes it of the Definition of a True Church *to retain the Purity of the Faith*, and he holds that this is inconſiſtent with *Hereſy* and *Schiſm*, for it is *oppoſed*

* *Pag.* 461. † *Pag.* 441.

to

to them. How is it possible then that the Church of *Rome*, though Heretical, Schismatical, yea, and Idolatrous, should yet *hold the Essential Truths of Christianity?*

Into such apparent Absurdities and gross Inconsistencies do Men unhappily run when they abandon Truth. Have I not made it clear and evident in the Premisses, that the Church of *Rome* hath rejected several Essential Articles of the Christian Faith, and doth it not naturally and undeniably follow thence, that she is not a True Church? For if we take away that from a Church which is Essential to it, it ceases to be a Church, and consequently a True Church. Now then it must be said, that if, notwithstanding this, namely, that the Church of *Rome* hath subverted the *Fundamentals* and *Essentials* of the Christian Religion, we will still think that she deserves the Name of a *True Church*, our Charity is very extravagant. We are to remember, that it is the Profession of the Grand Truths of the Gospel that makes the True Church: And therefore when the Question is, whether the Church of *Rome* be a True Church, the first Thing that we are to do is, to enquire whether that Church retains the True Christian Faith and Doctrine; the same that was preached by the Apostles, and is at this Day to be found in their Writings. We have made this Enquiry, and have found that the Church of *Rome*, notwithstanding her Pretence of asserting the Articles of the Christian Faith, contradicts them, and particularly professes those Doctrines which are inconsistent with these Articles: and consequently we infer that she is no *True Church.*

If you still urge, that there are *some Essential Parts* of True Religion in Popery, and therefore it is a True Religion, and that Church is a True Church; I will shew you in some known Instances that this is nothing to the Purpose. The *Arian* Churches

Churches in the *East* were voted by the Orthodox Fathers to be no True Churches, becauſe they oppoſed the Divinity of Chriſt, though at the ſame time in other Fundamentals, and even concerning Chriſt, they owned and profeſſed the True Faith. Again, if you will make this to be an Argument of the Truth of the *Roman* Church and its Religion, that ſhe is Orthodox in *ſome* Fundamental Points, then you may after this Rate prove the *Mahometan* Church or Religion to be True; for the *Alcoran* aſſerts there is but One God, and He alone is to be worſhipped, (which is more than the Church of *Rome* holds): It allows of the Books of the Old and New Teſtament; it acknowledges that *Moſes* and Jeſus Chriſt were Prophets ſent from God; that Chriſt was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, and was born of the *Virgin Mary*; that Chriſt wrought True Miracles to atteſt his Religion. The *Turks* own the Article of Chriſt's Aſcenſion into Heaven, and they believe a Heaven, and Hell, and the Laſt Judgement. But the Belief and Profeſſion of theſe Truths do not make the *Mahometans* a *True Church:* So neither can theſe and ſome others make the *Papiſts* to be ſuch. For though they profeſs ſeveral Doctrines that are True, yet ſome of the *main* and *ſubſtantial Ones*, which chiefly conſtitute the Chriſtian Religion, are caſt off by them. This ſhews the Vanity of our Adverſaries arguing. Yea, if we may argue from the Church of *Rome*'s holding *ſome* Doctrines Eſſential to the Chriſtian Religion, that therefore ſhe is a True Church; we may by the like Sophiſtry prove, that the *Pagans* had and have a True Religion, and are a True Church; for 'tis well known that they have a Mixture of ſome True and Right Notions with their Infidelity and Idolatry.

Let me add this, to explain my ſelf on this Head, and to ſet the Matter in a true Light: I do not ſay that all unſound Doctrines take away the Eſſence

ſence of a Church, and make it ceaſe to be a True One; becauſe, perhaps, there never will be a Church upon Earth wholly void of theſe: but this I ſay, that a *Church's Allowing*, *Teaching*, and *Commanding* Falſe Doctrines, and likewiſe *Impoſing* them, takes away the very Nature and Eſſence of a Church, and you can no longer call it a True One. I will deſire the Reader to weigh well what *Bellarmine* himſelf thought fit to ſuggeſt on this Occaſion*, "The Churches of *Corinth* and *Galatia*", ſaith he, "were True Churches, for St. *Paul* calls "them *Churches of the Saints*, and yet there were "Falſe Doctrines maintained by ſome there; they "denied the Reſurrection, 1 *Cor.* xv. they joyned "*Moſaic* Rites with the Goſpel of Chriſt, *Gal.* i. But "how could they be *True Churches* when they taught "Hereſies? He anſwers thus; It is one thing to "Err, but to be ready to learn and reform: It is "an other thing to be unwilling to learn and to "comply with the Truth when it is diſcovered to "them. The Firſt may be in a Particular Church, "but the Second can be found only in the Sy-"nagogues of *Satan*, and the Churches of Malig-"nants". This is the Caſe of the *Roman* Church, they not only hold Erroneous Doctrines, but they perſiſt in the Profeſſion of them, and refuſe to receive the contrary Truths, though they are plainly diſcovered to them, and urged upon them. From this obſtinate Behaviour, we have Reaſon to deny them the Title of a *True Church*, and we have *Bellarmine's* Leave to do ſo.

If it be further inſiſted on, (as it is by ſome of our Church) that the Church of *Rome* only *adds new Articles of Religion*, and that from this ſhe cannot have the Denomination of a *Falſe Church*, becauſe ſhe retains the Old Articles: My Anſwer to this might be, that I have in ſeveral Inſtances

* De Notis Eccleſiæ. *Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 3.

ſhewed

ſhewed that the Church of *Rome* rejects even the *Eſſential Articles* of Religion contained in the Word of God: But to wave that at preſent, it is ſufficient to ſay, that though ſhe did not in plain and expreſs Terms deny any Fundamental and Eſſential Articles, yet by that *Addition which ſhe makes to them*, ſhe doth in effect deny and renounce them. For which very Reaſon, without doubt, the *Adding* to the Word of God is eſteemed ſo heinous a Crime, and is ſo ſtrictly forbidden and condemned. *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither ſhall ye diminiſh ought from it*, Deut. iv. 2. And the ſame again, *Chap.* xii. 32. *Every Word of God is pure; add thou not unto his Words*, Prov. xxx. 5, 6. This *Adding* is ſeverely threatened with *an Addition of Plagues*, Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Thoſe that are guilty of this, are once and again ſolemnly Anathematized by the Great Apoſtle, *Gal.* i. 8, 9. *If any Man preach any other Goſpel unto you than that ye have received, let him be Accurſed.* Though he preaches ſome Fundamental Doctrines of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, yet if he ſuperadds ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, (as the Apoſtle calls it, *ver.* 6.) *an other Goſpel*, if he introduces New Articles of Faith, and eſpecially if he ſtrives to Impoſe them as abſolutely Neceſſary to be believed, he falls under the Curſe of God, and that deſervedly.

Now I ask, whether a *Church* that doth this, be not as liable to this heavy Doom and Execration as a *ſingle Preacher?* And I ask, whether this *Accurſed Church* ought to be reputed a *True Church?* I think nothing hinders us from making up the Argument thus; An Accurſed Church is not a True Church: but the Church of *Rome* is an Accurſed Church, according to *Gal.* i. 8, 9. Therefore ſhe is not a True Church. Hitherto we have conſidered the Church of *Rome* as to her *Doctrines*, and have thence proved that ſhe ought not to be reckoned as a True Church. Which is thus expreſſed

pressed by a Learned Writer of our Church; * *If any Society of Men challenges the Name of* CHURCH *to itself, and boasts never so much of its Unity, Succession, Antiquity, the Name of Catholick,* &c. *if their Doctrine be repugnant to what was originally delivered by the Founder of the Christian Religion, their Society is not the True Christian Church.* If this disagrees with what he had said before, we may observe thence how Truth makes its way through the Self-Contradictions of Writers.

The Second Inconteſtable Mark of the *True Church* is the *True Worſhip of God*, and in conſequence of this we are certain that the *Church of Rome* is not a *True Church*. Yea, her *False Worſhip* proves her to be a *False Church*. The *Devotion* of the Papiſts is moſtly ſpent in Superſtitious Ceremonies; they place a great Part of their Religion in Obſervances of a mean and worthleſs Nature, as about *Holy Water*, *Oyl*, *Conſecrated Salt*, *Bells*, *Candles*, *Croſſes*, *Garments*, by exorciſing ſome of which they pretend to endue them with a Supernatural Power and Efficacy: they place great Virtue in extravagant Faſtings, in Scourgings, and in Pilgrimages.

By an exceſſive Multitude of External Rites they damp the Spirit of True Chriſtianity, they render the Worſhip of God Formal; beſides that theſe are eſteemed to be Meritorious and Satisfactory.

They hold that Prayer and other Religious Duties are acceptable and prevalent as they are *Works done* (for ſo they word it), that is, as they are *mere external Acts*. It is not eſſential to Prayer to attend to what is ſpoken, or ſo much as to know it; and therefore Prayer in *an unknown Tongue* is good and laudable Devotion with them.

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* Stillingfleet, his Rational Account of the Proteſtant Religion, *part.* 1. *chap.* 5.

Becauſe

Becauſe their *Worſhip* is according to their *Belief*, what they are perſuaded of in way of *Opinion*, they reduce to Practice in way of *Devotion* and *Adoration*, therefore I cannot avoid ſome Things which I mentioned before. As they hold it lawful to pay divine Adoration to the Virgin *Mary* and other Saints, ſo they actually do it by making their Supplications to them, and deſiring them to confer upon them —thoſe Bleſſings which God only can beſtow. Yea, it plainly appears that they have a greater Reverence for the Saints than for God himſelf, they confide more in the Benefits and Miracles wrought by them than in the Mercy, Power, and Goodneſs of their Maker; and the Favour and Patronage of the Virgin *Mary* is much more ſought for and prized than that of Our Saviour: and their very Preachers and Doctors at the Entrance of their Sermons invoke Her Help and Aſſiſtance, and not Chriſt's. Indeed it is the Notion which they all entertain, that the Virgin Mary is more powerful and hath a greater Intereſt in Heaven than her Son. Who then can deny that their Prayers are Idolatrous? And even Mr. *Thorndike* will tell you what is the Conſequent of that, *If the Prayers of the Church of Rome*, ſaith he, *are Idolatrous, then is the Church of Rome neceſſarily no True Church.* Epilog. book 3. chap. 30.

They *worſhip Images and Crucifixes*, and the Prieſts highly commend this ſort of Adoration to the People. The * *Roman Catechiſm* ſaith that *this Worſhip is very Beneficial, and the People are to be informed that it is ſo; and that Images are to be in Churches, not merely for Inſtruction, but that they may be worſhipped.* And it is a plain Proof of the Church of *Rome*'s worſhipping of Images, that ſhe ſtrikes out the Second Commandment, which forbids the Adoration of Images, out of the Decalogue.

* Pars 3. Cap. 2.

And

And, whatever some may pretend, there is no Difference at all between the Worship which the Papists give to Christ his Image, and that which they give to the Images of the Saints; for they fall down before both, they kneel to both, they pray to them, they vow to them, they offer Incense, and set up Tapers, and bring Gifts to them alike.

If it be said in their behalf that they worship *God* and *Christ* in and by an Image, the Answer to this is ready, namely, that it is Idolatry to worship the True God by an Image, or else the *Jews* worshiping the Golden Calf would not have been reckoned Idolatry (as it was) and so severely punished, though they directed and intended the Worship to *Jehovah*, as is plain from the Text.

An other Instance of Popish Idolatry is their Worshiping the *Host in the Sacrament* of the Lord's Supper; they pay divine Adoration to a Bit of Bread, as they themselves own; for they confess that they give LATRIA, that is, the Worship which is due to the only True God, to the consecrated Bread. Therefore * one of our Learned Prelates expressly acknowledges that this Worship is *Formal Idolatry*. And how can it be otherwise, seeing they yield that Worship to the Creature which is due only to the Creator? How then can the Church of *Rome* be a True Church when it is guilty of downright Idolatry? It is not to be doubted that Idolatry excludes them from being a True Church.

If it be alledged that the Papists worship the Supream God, therefore they are no Idolaters, the Consequence is denied; for it is Idolatry to worship any other together with the True God, as we gather from the First Commandment, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*; or, as the Septuagint render it, *besides me*: and therefore this Commandment is thus expressed by Our Saviour, *Mat.*

* Bishop *Taylor* in his Dissuasive from Popery.

iv. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.*

If it be ſaid that the Papiſts verily believe the Bread in the Sacrament to be the true Body of *Chriſt*, and therefore That may authorize their worſhiping it: I anſwer to this by asking this Queſtion; Were the Heathens of old, who worſhiped the Sun, excuſed from the Guilt of Idolatry, becauſe they were verily perſuaded that the Sun was a Deity? I never heard that any of our Divines were of this Opinion. So here there is as little Ground to think that the Papiſts are free from Idolatry, becauſe when they worſhip the Bread in the Euchariſt, they believe it to be Chriſt's Body. Their Belief doth not alter the Truth and Reality of the Thing; Idolatry is Idolatry whether they think ſo or not. The true and adequate Notion of Idolatry is giving that Worſhip to the Creature which belongs only to the Creator: Now, they of the Church of *Rome* do this, they ſet up a Wafer for a God; with five Words they ſay they can and do create the Maker and Creator of the World; and yet we know that there is ſtill nothing but Bread: This is groſs *Idolatry* and *is to be abhorred of all faithful Chriſtians*, as Our Church hath determined in the Rubrick appertaining to the *Office of the Communion*. With Reference to this and other Practices in the Church of *Rome*, the Reverend Author above mentioned (in his *Diſſuaſive from Popery*) concludes that *with all the Artifices which ſhe uſes ſhe can never juſtify herſelf, or acquit their common Practices from Idolatry*. Is She notwithſtanding this, a *True Church?*

But then you will ſay, the *Jewiſh Church* was ſometimes *Idolatrous*, and yet it ceaſed not to be a *True Church*, for if that was not ſuch, God had no True Church at all upon Earth in thoſe Times. I anſwer that it is a great Miſtake that the *Jewiſh* Church was Idolatrous; not but that there was groſs Idolatry among the *Jews*, but the *Church* was

was not Idolatrous, for *there were seven thousand that had not bowed their Knees to Baal*, 1 Kings, xix. 18. Rom. xi. 4. and those were the *Jewish Church* at that time. Yea, though the Kingdom of *Juda* was in a great measure Idolatrous, yet we do not read that they suppressed the *Book of the Law*, or Corrupted it: and *This* was the Standard of the Religion of the *Jewish* Church. It is certain then that the Worship of the *Jewish* Church was not Idolatrous as *such*, that is, as it was the Worship of the *Jewish* Church, for the *Jewish* Religion and Worship were of God's own appointing, and allowed of no Idolatry, but utterly condemned it. But it is far otherwise in the Church of *Rome*, She suppresses the Books of the Law and of the Gospel, and keeps them from the People, and designedly corrupts the Meaning of them, and even blots out the Second Commandment (as hath been said before) which forbids the Worshiping of Images: and She is herself Idolatrous, and it is her professed Doctrine that the People may worship others besides God, and She allows of and commands this Practice. This makes the Case of the *Jews* and the *Romanists* quite Different. The *Jewish* Law and Church condemned Idolatry, but the *Roman* Law and Church approve of Idolatrous Worship; and therefore I conclude that the Church of *Rome* cannot possibly be a True Church, unless an Idolatrous one be so. I need not, I think, insist any longer on this Head, for it is universally agreed by all that have a true Notion of Religion, that *True Worship* is necessary to the constituting a *True Church*, according to that Antient Maxim of *Lactantius*, * *That only is the Catholick Church which retains the true Worship of God.* And thence we know that *Rome* is not the *Catholick Church*, though She usurps that Name, and excludes all other Churches: For

* Institut. lib. 4. cap. ult.

She appoints God a Worſhip which he never preſcribed, and She enjoins the Adoring of Creatures, which he hath directly forbid.

Now then let us ſum up the two foregoing Heads which I made uſe of to diſprove the Church of *Rome*'s Claim of being a True Church. That Church which *profeſſedly maintains ſundry Groſs Errors*, and *denies ſome of the moſt Important and Fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Faith*, is no True Church; but the Church of *Rome* doth this, therefore She is no True Church. Again, That Church which upholds *Falſe and Idolatrous Worſhip* is no True Church; but the Church of *Rome* doth ſo, therefore She is not to be reckoned as a True Church. Or we may Argue thus; That Society or Body of Men that hath not the *Eſſentials of a True Church*, ought not to pretend to be a True Church; but the Church of *Rome* hath not the *Eſſentials* of a True Church, for the Word of God is not truly preached among them, the Prayers not rightly offered, the Sacraments not adminiſtered in a due manner, nor is the whole Worſhip free from groſs *Superſtition* and *Idolatry*; therefore the Church of *Rome* is no True Church. (And here by the way obſerve that by the ſame Argument that we of the *Church of England* prove our ſelves to be a *True Church*, namely, becauſe our *Doctrine* and *Worſhip* are Right, we alſo prove thoſe of *Rome* to be no True Church. Wherefore let us have a care that we do not Unchurch ourſelves.) Nay further, that Church which makes the Belief and Profeſſion of Erroneous Articles, and the Practice of Falſe Worſhip *neceſſary to Chriſtian Communion, yea to Eternal Salvation*, cannot poſſibly be a True Church; but this is done by the *Roman* Church: She impoſes upon all Men her Doctrines and Worſhip, as abſolutely neceſſary Terms of Communion with her, and of entering into Heaven hereafter.

Other

Other Arguments may be made use of, as this; If the Church of *Rome* be a *Cheat* and *Imposture*, then She is no *True Church*; but we have many Reasons to induce us to believe that She is an arrant Cheat and Imposture. That She is so, is evident from her *Dissembling* and *Falsifying* in the most Important Matters. Of which there are these two plain Proofs; First, whereas they pretend to extraordinary Sanctity in the Church of *Rome*, their real and chief Design is to promote Secular Power and Grandour. This runs through all their seeming Acts of Religion and Devotion, as I have *particularly* shewed on an * other occasion, which I shall shortly publish. Any unprejudiced Man may discern that their Principal Aim is Temporal Pomp and Worldly Dominion, Vast Revenues and Incomes to feed the greedy Avarice, Luxury, and Pride of the Churchmen. So that though the Church of *Rome* carries with her the Name of a Spiritual Society, yet her Design is to supplant and undermine the Foundations of the Church of Christ by Affectation of Temporal Sovereignty, by External Splendour and Greatness, and gross Sensuality. See this exemplified in plain and undeniable Instances by a Faithful and Impartial Eye-witness in his *Speculum Europæ*. This proves the Church of *Rome* to be an Imposture.

Secondly, She makes use of *Frauds* and *Cheats* to promote her Cause, which shews that She herself is a Cheat and a Lye. If She were a True Church, what occasion hath She for *Fables* and *Legends*, for *Forged Writings*, for *Expurgatory Indices*, and for *Feigned Miracles?* Why need they cause their Images to sweat, to weep, to bleed, to talk sometimes, and to do Wonders, as the *Pagan Worshippers* practised heretofore with *their* Images and Idols? This they do because they know it is the Way to

* Introduction to the Discourses on the Popish Points.

obtrude the Belief of their falſe Doctrines on the World, and to promote their Superſtitions among the ignorant and credulous People. But theſe Falſe Arts plainly ſhew their Religion and Church to be Falſe. For a Religion or Church that is True ſtands not in need of Forgeries and Lies to ſupport it; it wants no Impoſtures and Deluſions to advance the Honour of it, nay, it is unſpeakably diſhonoured and prophaned by theſe. In ſhort, it is not a True, but an Adulterate Church, that makes uſe of ſuch Vile Artifices, and we may certainly know her to be ſuch by her Tricking after this manner.

Moreover, I take this to be an Unanſwerable Argument, The Church of *Antichriſt* is not a True Church: but the Church of *Rome* is the Church of *Antichriſt*, therefore it is not, neither can be a True Church. That the Church of Antichriſt is not a True Church, is demonſtrated from this; that That Church which is not *Chriſtian* is not a True Church, otherwiſe the Body of the *Jews* at this day, and that of the *Turks* are True Churches: but the Church of *Rome* is not a Chriſtian Church, for a *Chriſtian Church* and an *Antichriſtian Church* are Contradictions in the very Terms. The Church of Chriſt and the Church of Antichriſt are directly oppoſite to each other, and therefore that Body of Men who conſtitute the latter, cannot poſſibly belong to the former. And now, that the Church of *Rome* is *Antichriſtian*, and even *Antichriſt itſelf*, we are taught by the Unanimous Determination of all Proteſtant Churches, and of our *Own* in particular; as is evident from ſeveral of her *Homilies*, and from the Form of *Service* for the 5th of *November*. All our Prelates and Doctors agreed in this, as an Eſtabliſhed Truth: Archbiſhop *Whitgift* maintained this for his *Theſis* at a Publick Commencement, when he took his Degree of Doctor of Divinity, *Papa eſt ille Antichriſtus.*

christus. And we and other Protestant Churches derived this firm Belief and Persuasion from the Apostle St. *Paul*'s Description and Character of Antichrist in 2 *Thess.* ii. and from several Passages in the *Apocalyptick* Writings, which particularly and designedly speak of Antichrist, and cannot fairly be applied to any but the Church of *Rome*, and especially the Head of it. For my part, I do not see how a True Son of the *Church of England* can evade and reject the Plain Testimony which She bears to this Doctrine, and which She professes to be grounded on the Inspired Writings, namely, that the Church of *Rome* is the Church of Antichrist; whence it incontestably follows that She is not a True Church.

Again, I argue thus; Unless those that are of the Church of *England* own the Church of *Rome* to be a *False Church*, that is, erring in Fundamentals, they cannot maintain their Plea against the *Non-Conformists*, who, we say, separate from our Church because of some Indifferent and Circumstantial Matters. We are wont to tell them that they ought not thus to separate from our Church, seeing our Church holds all the Essentials of True Worship: and therefore they have no warrant thus to separate from her on the account of some Circumstances and Modes of Worship. But why then do we separate from the Church of *Rome*, which our Divines say errs only as to some Modes of Religion, not as to Substance; for they tell us that she retains all the Necessary Doctrines of the Christian Religion, all its Fundamental and Essential Articles, which constitutes her a True Church. But if This be so, then why did we separate from her? Can we account for our abandoning the *True Church* of Christ? You will say, we do it because of some Corruptions in that Church; but that will not authorize our Separation; for we always assert, against the Dissenters, that

ſome Corruptions in a Church are not a ſufficient Ground for any Perſons to break off their Communion with it: therefore we charge the Diſſenters with Unlawful Separation, and tell them that they have no Cauſe to divide themſelves from us. But may not the *Papiſts* for the ſame Reaſon tell us that we have no Cauſe to ſeparate from *them*; for ſome Corruptions in their Church are not a ſufficient Reaſon why we ſhould ſeparate from them; for we hold that theſe do not hinder their being a True Church; we maintain that they profeſs all the Neceſſary Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, and all the conſtituent Parts of Divine Worſhip, for otherwiſe they could not be a *True Church*. Wherefore for my part I muſt needs confeſs that upon Suppoſition that the Church of *Rome* is a True Church, I cannot ſee any good and ſolid Ground why we ſhould blame the Diſſenters as Schiſmaticks and unlawful Separatiſts from our Church: for if we ourſelves ſeparate from the Church of *Rome* becauſe of ſome Modes in Religion, and not any *Subſtantial* or *Neceſſary* Difference between us, are not the Diſſenters excuſable for their Separating from us on the ſame foot, namely, becauſe they cannot agree with us in ſome Modes and Circumſtances of Worſhip, and really in their Conſciences believe that they ought not to hold Communion with us in that reſpect.

I urge this by further appealing to our own Practice; If the Church of *Rome* be a True Church, why did we and other Churches ſeparate from her at the *Reformation?* Doth not our caſting her off ſhew that we really thought her to be no *True Church?* It is owned by Mr. *Chillingworth* that * if *the Separation was neceſſary which the Proteſtant Biſhops made from the Church of Rome, then the Church of Rome cannot be a True Church.* Which

* Religion of Proteſtants, *&c.* chap 6. ſect. 55.

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is very plain, becauſe there is no *Neceſſity* of Separating from a *True Church.* And it is as plain that our Reformers ſeparated from the Church of *Rome* for this very Reaſon, namely, becauſe it was not a True Church. Which I demonſtrate thus; They, (with all Moderate Proteſtants) held that it is lawful to maintain Communion with a Church into which ſome Corruptions in Doctrine and Worſhip have crept (as into the Churches of *Corinth* and *Galatia*) if that Church be True and Sound as to all its *Eſſentials.* Wherefore it is evident that if the Church of *Rome* had been ſound as to all its *Eſſentials*, our Reformers would not have ſeparated from it. We muſt grant then that there was an Abſolute Neceſſity of leaving the Church of *Rome*, and upon this foot, becauſe She was not a *True Church.* I challenge any Man to put by the Force and Dint of this Argument.

I Argue further; If the Church of *Rome* were a True Church, there would have been in Scripture no Call to any Perſons to forſake her, and hold no Communion with her; but in *Rev.* xviii. 4. we read this Call, *Come out of her, my People.* So ſpeaks God by his Angel to thoſe in *Babylon* who were not infected with her Corrupt Doctrines and Practices: and that by *Babylon* is meant the Kingdom of Antichriſt, the Church and Polity of *Rome*, is the united Suffrage and Determination of the moſt Judicious Writers of the *Proteſtant Churches*, and of *Ours* in particular. Yea, *Baronius* and *Bellarmine* and moſt of the *Roman* Communion hold that *Rome* is meant by *Babylon*, in 1 *Pet.* v. 13. If then we muſt *come out* of the Myſtical *Babylon*, the Church of *Rome*, ſhe is no True Church; we muſt own this to be ſound Reaſoning, unleſs we can imagine that we ſhould be bid from Heaven to come out of the True Church. And beſides, if *Rome* were a True Church, St. *John* would not have thundered out ſuch *Terrible Menaces* againſt it as he doth

doth in *Rev.* xiv. 9, 10, 11. This is worth our conſidering.

But I paſs to an other Claſſis of Arguments, and I ſhall make it evident that the Church of *Rome* is no True Church, by conſidering what are the uſual Criterions and Marks of *Truth*, what are the common Ways that we take of convincing our ſelves and others, that any thing is *True*. When we would be certain that a *Balance* is True, or that a *Meaſure* is ſo, do we not compare them with the *Standard?* If they agree with this, do we not conclude that they are a True Balance, and a True Meaſure? How do we know a *True Copy* but by examining it by the *Original?* If it agrees with this, we pronounce it to be *True*. Now, it is ſo in the preſent Caſe: The Way to know whether a *Church* be True, is to bring it to the *Standard*, and that is the Holy Scripture; to compare it with the *Original*, and that is to be found only in the Bible, eſpecially the New Teſtament. If a Religion or a Church anſwers to this, it is a True Religion and a True Church: If not, it is a Falſe one.

How do we prove the Religion of the *Jews* at this Day to be a Falſe Religion, but by ſhewing that it anſwers not to the Model which Chriſt hath given us in the Inſpired Writings? And how do we prove that the *Heathen*, and that the *Mahometan* Religion are not True, but by demonſtrating their Inconſiſtency with the Standard of Religion, which is left us by our Saviour and his Apoſtles? In the ſame Manner we may infallibly know, that the Religion and the Church of *Rome* are not True, becauſe they diſagree with the only Pattern and Standard of the True Religion, and of a True Church, namely, the *Word of God*. This is the Touchſtone by which we try whether a Church be True or not. That is a True Church that profeſſes the True Religion: And that is the True Religion which

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is according to the Holy Scriptures. Here we are taught what is *True Doctrine*, and what is *True Worship*, (which make a *True Church*); and by comparing the Doctrine and Worship of the Church of *Rome* with these, we plainly discern, that she is a False Church; for she teaches False Doctrines, and enjoyns a False Worship, yea, she enjoyns them *as Necessary to Salvation*. Who then can affirm with any shew of Reason, that the Church of *Rome* is a True Church? Yea, who cannot with good Reason maintain that she is a Counterfeit Church, and only apes the True Church?

What St. *Augustine* saith, with Relation to the *Donatists*, may be applied here, and will be a good Direction to us to find out the True Church. * *The Question between us and the Donatists*, saith he, *is, Where is the Church? what then shall we do? shall we seek for the Church in our own Words, or in those of her Head our Lord Jesus Christ? I think we ought to seek Her rather in his Words, who is the Truth, and best knows his own Body.* And afterwards, he saith, † *Let us therefore look for the True Church in the Holy Canonical Scriptures.* The Reason of this is very Substantial; for the *True Church* is that which is described to be *such* in these Sacred Writings, and the *False Church* is that which is represented there as *such*. The Church is founded on the Scriptures, and therefore in them only we are to search for the *Truth* or *Falsity* of a Church. But by what Figure can you call that the True Church which rejects the Doctrines and Practices prescribed us in the Scriptures, and professes and im-

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* Inter nos & Donatistas quæstio est, Ubi sit Ecclesia? Quid ergo facturi sumus? In verbis nostris eam quæsituri, an in verbis Capitis sui Domini nostri Jesu Christi? Puto quod in illius potius verbis eam quærere debemus qui Veritas est, & optimè novit corpus suum. *De Unit. Eccles.* cap. 2.

† Ergo in Scripturis Sanctis Canonicis eam requiramus. *cap.* 3.

poses

poſes Doctrines and Practices clearly oppoſite to thoſe that are enjoyned us by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, yea, which diſparages and vilifies the Scriptures, and denies them to be a ſufficient Rule of Faith and Manners? I ſtand amazed to ſee ſome of our Churchmen, notwithſtanding this, crying up the Church of *Rome* as a *True Church.*

I will here take Notice, how ſome of them are pleaſed to make uſe of ſome *Evaſions* to favour the *Romaniſts.* They are wont to uſe this *Compariſon*, and they fancy there is great Vertue and Force in it: As a ſick and diſeaſed Man, or a lame or blind Man is a True Man, ſo the *Church of Rome* is a *True Church*, though ſhe hath her Maladies and Sickneſſes, though a very great Lameneſs and Blindneſs have ſeized her. Thus Biſhop *Bramhall*, in his *Vindication of Grotius*, &c. But there is nothing of Weight at all in this Compariſon; for a ſick, or a lame, or a blind Man, hath all the *Eſſentials* of a Man; he hath every thing that is requiſite to make him a True Man: But the Church of *Rome* hath not thoſe things which conſtitute a True Church; ſhe wants the very Eſſentials of a Church as I have ſhewed. A *diſeaſed Man* is a *True Man*, but a *dead Man* is not: He cannot, with any Propriety, be called a Man. So the Church of *Rome* may be ſaid to be *dead*, rather than *diſeaſed*; for ſhe failing in the very *Vitals* of Religion (as hath been proved) cannot be reckoned among the *Living*, but may deſervedly be pronounced a *dead Church*, and conſequently not a true one. It muſt here be remembered, that though it is not Health or Soundneſs of Body that makes a Man a Man, yet it is Soundneſs of Doctrine, together with Rectitude of Worſhip, that makes a Church a *Church:* And conſequently the Church of *Rome* being deſtitute of theſe is no True Church. Thus we ſee that the *Compariſon* is nothing to the Purpoſe, tho' it be frequently uſed, and with ſome Aſſurance by our Churchmen.

Others

Others tell us, that a whorish Wife, though she is false to her Husband, is a True Woman; so the Church of *Rome*, though she be a *Great Whore*, Rev. xvii. 1. xix. 2. yet she is a True Church. But who sees not how shallow and impertinent this is? For though it may be said, a whorish Wife is a True Woman, yet we cannot say she is a *True Wife*, which is the *Relation* that answers to the *Church*, as the Apostle long since told us.

But hear what strange kind of Language they further make use of to support their Opinion. * *The Church of Rome*, say they, *is Metaphysically a True Church, as a Thief is a True Man, consisting of Body and Soul; but Morally it is not a True Church, because of its Corruptions and Errours.* We may perceive they are put hard to it, when such a Quaint Distinction as this is brought up to maintain the Cause. Let the Church of *Rome* be as true in *Metaphysicks* as she will, yet if she be not so in *Ethicks*, and according to the *Christian Institution*, there is nothing said in her Behalf. Wherefore there is nothing advanced by this Distinction, but a farther Confirmation of what I have offered and proved, that the Church of *Rome*, *Morally* or *Christianly* speaking, is not to be accounted a True Church: It hath not the Qualifications which either *Morality* or *Christianity* requires in that Body of Men which we call a Church.

I think I need not take notice of an other Subterfuge, that which Archbishop *Laud*, in his *Conference* with *Fisher*, makes use of. He grants that the Church of *Rome* is not the *Right Church*, yet he will not be beaten off from its being a *True Church*. But is not *Right* opposed to *Wrong*, and then seeing he grants that the Church of *Rome* is not the *Right Church*, must he not yield it to be the *Wrong* One?

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* Bishop *Bramhall's* Vindication of *Grotius*, &c.

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And is not that *an other Word* for a *Falſe* One? Any unprejudiced Man will own this. So that we ſee our Adverſaries, as ſerious as they ſeem to be, do but trifle, and play with Words. They may ſtrain them, and call Things as they pleaſe, but if they confine themſelves to Propriety of Speech, it is evident that they cannot call that Body of Men who embrace the Popiſh Religion a *Church*. Strictly ſpeaking, they are no ſuch thing. They have the bare *Title* of a Church, and nothing elſe. That which we call a Falling Star, is not a Star: In the ſame Senſe we may ſay, that the Church of *Rome*, that Apoſtate Fallen Church, is not a Church. Tho' in common Diſcourſe we attribute that Name to it, yet it is an improper Mode of Speaking. When we ſpeak of the Idols of the *Gentiles*, and call them *falſe gods*, we do as good as deny them to be *Gods*, for *Falſe gods* are *No Gods*: So though the Church of *Rome* hath the Name of a Church, yet it is not a True one, but a Falſe one. In a Word, it is equivocally called a Church, as a *dead Man* is called a *Man*.

There is an other Objection that is commonly made uſe of, namely, that if the Body of Men in the *Roman* Society be not a *Church*, and a *True Church*, but an *idolatrous* One, then the *Ordination* and *Miniſtry* which we have received from them are not True, and conſequently our Ordination and Miniſtry, which were at firſt conveyed from them, are void: And ſo whilſt we are endeavouring to prove the Church of *Rome* to be no Church, we prove our own to be none. To this it is anſwered, that All that *Idolaters* do in a Church is not Unlawful. Among the Corruptions of Doctrine and Worſhip in the Church of *Rome*, *Ordination* was, as to the *Main* and *Subſtance* of it, good and valid. Thoſe therefore that were ordained by the Papiſts, were truly ordained.

Beſides,

Besides, the Legitimacy of a publick outward Call in the Christian Church to the Ministry, depends upon the *External Profession of the Christian Religion*, and consequently the Church of *Rome* openly professing Christianity, hath Power to appoint Persons to the Ministerial Function: And the Lawfulness of this outward Administration in the Church, is not impaired by the Errours of the Administrators. As we cannot then argue from the Lawfulness of such an Administration, to the Truth and Lawfulness of the Church wherein this is done; so we cannot argue from the Illegitimacy and Idolatry of a Church, to the Unlawfulness and Nullity of some external Administrations in the Church.

And truly this was never questioned; for several *Arian* and *Nestorian* Bishops and Presbyters were allowed by the *Catholicks* to be True Ministers, though they were ordained by those of a False Church. The first *Council* of *Nice*, and most of the *Fathers* have determined, that those that are ordained by Heretical Bishops or Presbyters, need not, ought not to re-iterate their Ordination, it being as to the Substance of it Legitimate. And so as to *Baptism*, we know what was the Sense of the Antient Fathers concerning the Repeating it; for though the *Cyprianick* and the *African* Churches were fierce for *Rebaptizing* those who had been baptized by Hereticks, yet other Churches, yea and Councils, determined the contrary. It is true, the *Eastern* Churches also were generally for Rebaptizing, and the Council of *Laodicea* made a Decree to that Purpose; but the *Western* Bishops and Churches always determined, that those who were re-admitted into the Church, should not be baptized again: Their former Baptism by Hereticks was valid, and not to be nulled. And even among the *Africans*, the Great St. *Augustine* maintains *, that

* De Baptismo, l. 2. c. 7. l. 4. c. 6.

Baptism

Baptiſm conferred by Hereticks, in the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, is not to be reiterated. I might add, that it was blameable in the *Cataphryges*, the *Novatians*, and *Donatiſts*, who were reckoned as Schiſmaticks by the Orthodox, that they Re-baptized thoſe who came over to their Communion and Party, and would not otherwiſe admit them into their Communion.

Now, from what was determined by the Antient Churches, concerning the *Baptiſm* of thoſe that were baptized by Hereticks, we may gather what their Sentiment was concerning *Ordination*, namely, that it was not to be repeated, though it was adminiſtred in an Heretical Church: That did not null the Lawfulneſs of that Ordinance. And I have mentioned before, that the firſt *Nicene* Council allowed of the Impoſition of Hands by Hereticks in Ordination: And if ſuch as had been ordained by them returned to the Catholick Church, they were to be received without New Orders. This hath been obſerved even among the *Reformed Churches:* Re-ordination was not required of thoſe that came from the *Roman* Church to them: But being ordained to preach and to adminiſter the Sacraments, it was thought they might now diſcharge thoſe Offices in a right Manner, which they had done before in a wrong one. *Luther*, and *Calvin*, and others, who were ordained by the *Roman* Biſhops, did not receive a New Ordination. All this, I hope makes it evident, that though the Church of *Rome* be not a True Church; and though Ordination hath been conferred by ſome of that Church on ſome of our Biſhops, yet it doth not follow thence that their Ordination is void or invalid; for we ſee that according to the Judgement and Practice of the Antient Chriſtian Churches, thoſe Men were allowed to be *True Miniſters* who were ordained by *Hereticks*. Wherefore one who hath handled this Subject with good Repute, conforms himſelf to this Sentiment,

Sentiment, that Ministers that are Hereticks may lawfully Ordain; and the Reason he gives is remarkable, * *This Defect of True Faith is prejudicial to the Person himself, but not to the Institution of Christ, nor doth it deprive the Church of the Benefit of that Institution.*

If this Answer doth not satisfy the Objection, I will add an other, to wit, that though it should follow from the Church of *Rome*'s *not being a True Church*, that the Ecclesiastical Orders derived from her are *not valid*, but *nulled*, yet this doth not affect our Case at all. For right Ordination, where it cannot be had, is not necessary, no more than right Baptism. When God is pleased to bring Persons under such a *Necessity*, he accepts of them without a Formal Baptizing, or Regular Ordaining. And particularly with Reference to the Latter of these, some are sufficiently authorized by divine Providence to execute the Office of Pastors in the Church, and there is no need of any other Commission. In extraordinary Cases there must be extraordinary Expedients and Methods. This was the Case of many Foreign *Protestants* at the first Reformation: And no Man can disapprove of the Lawfulness of it, because *Absolute Necessity* legitimates those things in the Christian Church which otherwise should be condemned.

Thus I have returned an Answer to the *Enquiry* grounded on the first Part of the Position, *Whether the Church of Rome is a True Church.* I have (as I apprehend) shewed, that they deserve not the Name of *Protestants* who assert this, and that there is great Reason to disclaim such a Proposition, seeing it is manifest that the *Romanists* subvert the very Foundations of the Christian Religion. I am more especially concerned that any of our *English Pro-*

* *Tho. Brown* Concio ad Clerum.

teſtants ſhould be blameable in this Matter, as we find they are; yea, we are told by One *, that *this Notion is almoſt proper to our* Engliſh, *to maintain that the* Roman *Church errs not in the Primary and Fundamental Articles of Faith*, and conſequently is a True Church. For my Part, I think any Man of Common Senſe is able to give Judgement on the other Side, becauſe it is plain and manifeſt that the *Roman* Church hath not theſe neceſſary Requiſites which conſtitute a True Church.

I proceed now to the ſecond Part of the Poſition, namely, that *Papiſts may be ſaved in that Church.* Which ſtrengthens the former Part of the Poſitions; for the Church of *Rome* muſt needs be granted to be a *True Church*, if *Salvation* is to be had in it, and that by the Conceſſion of *Proteſtants.* And ſo again, if the Church of *Rome* be a True Church, it follows, that Perſons may be ſaved in it; for that is a *True Church* where *Salvation* is to be had. I reckon then that I have anſwered the ſecond Part of the Poſition, by anſwering the Firſt; having proved that the Church of *Rome* is not a *True Church*, I have thereby proved that *Salvation* is not to be had in her Communion. This is ſo evident, that one would think no Man of ſerious Thoughts ſhould boggle at it. Yet I know not how it comes to paſs that many Proteſtant Writers will not allow of this: As fierce as they ſeem to be, or really are againſt Popery, yet they hold it to be a Religion wherein a Man may be ſaved. They declare that *Papiſts* may go to Heaven, though Papiſts hold that we *Proteſtants* cannot. On which Account one of our chief † Preachers tells us, that *he hopes well concerning thoſe of the Church of* Rome. And it is the Acknowledgement of others (yea great

* Mr. *Mede.* Book 4. *p.* 1058.
† Dr. *Tilloſon*, Serm. *Of the Trial of Spirits.*

Numbers)

Numbers) of our Divines, that the *Roman* Catholicks may be saved in their corrupt Religion.

I must needs declare, that I am of an other Perswasion, and I adhere to the Sentiments of those *Old Protestants*, who neither believed the *Roman Church* to be a *True Church*, nor to be in *the Way of Salvation*. Those Words of Dr. *Whitaker*, that learned and pious Professor of Divinity in the University of *Cambridge* in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, are worth the inserting here; * *We do not only hold*, saith he, *the Church of* Rome *which now is, not to be Catholick, but we contend that she is not a True Particular Church of Christ. Wherefore we maintain that she ought to be abandoned by all those who would be saved, as she is the Synagogue of Antichrist and Satan.* He is clear in this Point, that the Church of *Rome* is not a True Church, and that (as the Consequent of that) there is *no Salvation* to be had in her. And this was the professed Judgement of *Broughton*, *Reinolds*, *Perkins*, and others. And the thing itself carries sufficient Conviction and Evidence with it; for (as I have shewed already) there is neither the *Right Faith*, nor the *True Worship* in the *Roman* Communion: They hold *damnable Errours*, and they live in *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. Therefore Papists, *as Papists*, cannot be saved. *If any Man worship the Beast and his Image, and receive his Mark in his Forehead, or in his Hand, the same shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without Mixture into the Cup of his Indignation, and he shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone*, &c. *Rev.* xiv. 9, 10.

But then you will say, This is very Uncharitable, for this is to damn almost all People that lived before the *Protestant Religion* was on foot. Are we to think that in so many Ages all perished that

* Controvers. 2. Qu. 6. c. 1.

were *Papiſts?* Are all our Predeceſſors and Forefathers gone down to Hell? I anſwer,

1. I deny not that in the Times of Popery many were ſaved, namely, out of the Number of thoſe who were not come to *Maturity of Age*, and conſequently could not deliberately conſent to the Corruptions of Popery: And theſe Non-adult (as it is generally in all Places) far exceed in Number thoſe that are arrived to Years of Underſtanding and Judgement. Therefore it is vainly and falſely ſuggeſted, that we hold that the greateſt Part of Perſons before the Reformation were damned.

2. We read that there were many in *all Ages* paſt that declared their *Deteſtation* of the corrupt Doctrines and Practices of *Rome*; of which I have given the Reader a Specimen in an other Place. God reſerved to himſelf ſeveral Thouſands (as in the time of Idolatry among the *Iſraelites*) who did not ſubmit to the groſs Corruptions of Popery. Even in thoſe dark Times theſe were Witneſſes to the Truth, and ſtood up and maintained the right Faith and Worſhip. Theſe ſeem to be of the Number of thoſe who obeyed that Call which I mentioned before, *Come out of her, my People.* There were ſome even in *Babylon* that were the *People of God.* They were *in* the *Roman* Church, but not *of* it: They kept themſelves from being corrupted, and in that Senſe they may be ſaid to *have come out of it.* On which Account, I grant that Multitudes were ſaved in the Midſt of Popery.

3. We muſt *diſtinguiſh between Perſons*, even thoſe that were tainted with the Pollutions of the *Roman* Church. They were not *alike*, and therefore our Judgement concerning them muſt be different. Some were Weak and Ignorant, but Well-meaning, and may be ſaid to Erre in the Simplicity of their Hearts: Beſides, that they had not the Means and Opportunities of being inſtructed in the Truth, and informing themſelves about the Doctrines of Religion:

Religion: But others were wilfully blind, and erred out of Obstinacy, as the *Roman* Catholicks do now generally, who have Opportunities of being informed of the Truth of the Protestant Religion, and of being convinced of the Danger of Popery. I am not backward to believe, that though this latter Rank of Persons heretofore perished through their own Fault, because they chose to live and die in their Errours, yet the Former found Mercy and Favour through the Blood of Jesus. And thus we do not promiscuously sentence our *Forefathers* to Hell-flames, as we are represented by our Adversaries to do.

4. God might, by his Grace and good Spirit, convert several to the True Faith and Pure Religion, at the very *Close of their Lives.* When the ordinary Means of Salvation were wanting, God could supply his Servants with extraordinary Ones: For the Foundation of God stands sure, and he knows who are his, and he can call them when he pleases. Thus in the time of Popery *many were saved*, but not in *the Way of Popery*; for *Papists, as such*, cannot be saved, as I have before demonstrated. These Particulars which I have suggested, are, I conceive, a full Answer to that Imputation which is cast upon us, that we damn all our Predecessors that lived in the Time of Popery. It is manifest from what I have said, that this is a false and groundless Accusation, and I have shewed what Thoughts we ought to have concerning the State of our Forefathers.

I am drawing now towards a Conclusion. If you grant that those of the *Roman Communion* are in a *safe Condition*, (and they are so indeed if they be in a *salvable* State) you give up the Cause of *Protestantism*, and you in vain talk against the *Church of Rome.* You render the *Reformation* Unnecessary, or at least you hold it was not worth the great Pains and Trouble that attended it. There

is no Reaſon to be very much diſpleaſed at the *Roman* Communion, if we differ from them only in a few Accidental Things. If the general Aſſertion of our Clergy be true, that the Papiſts are Right as to *all Eſſentials*, and are in a *ſalvable* State, it is abſurd and unreaſonable to contend with them ſo much as we do, and to defend our Separation from them. We may ſpare all our paſſionate Harangues from the Pulpit and the Preſs againſt the Church of *Rome*, if ſhe be that Church which theſe Perſons repreſent her to be. To ſpeak freely, I queſtion not but that the *Decay* of the *Proteſtant Religion* is owing to this Perſwaſion in a great Meaſure. Yea, *Popery* hath ſenſibly increaſed and got ground, ſince that looſe Doctrine hath prevailed among Proteſtants, that Papiſts, as Papiſts may be ſaved. As long as our Divines hold this, they do in vain diſſwade any Perſons from embracing Popery, and they do in vain blame thoſe that do. This pernicious Notion Abroad is that which hath cauſed ſeveral Great Men, of late, to forſake the Proteſtant Religion, and to turn *Roman* Catholicks; and it may have the ſame Effect here at Home. Beſides, this makes thoſe that are of that Church adhere more firmly to it: And this makes Proteſtants, for Gain and Advantage, turn Papiſts. Thus this Exceſs of Charity is very dangerous and pernicious, and invites great Multitudes of Men to abandon the Reformed Religion. This over-laviſh yielding to ſuch a Propoſition as the *Salvability* of the Papiſts in their Corrupt Religion hath proved very deſtructive. There are many Examples of this, I'll mention but one. Mr. *Wadſworth*, a Convert to the Church of *Rome*, owns * this to be the great Occaſion of his Separating from the Church of *England*, becauſe the Men of

* In his Letter to Mr. *Bedel*.

this

this Church holds the Church of *Rome* to be a True Church, and that Salvation is to be had in it; and therefore it is more safe and secure to become a *Roman* Catholick, who is of a True Church by Consent of both Protestants and Papists, than to remain a Protestant, who is of a True Church in the Opinion of one of them only.

I will only conclude with this Reflection, that there are some of this Perswasion who shew more *Charity* to those of the *Roman Communion*, than to many of their own Brethren of the *Protestant Communion*, whose *Dissenting* Opinions and Practice they dislike. Some of these cry up the Church of *Rome* for a *True Church*; and hold that there are True Sacraments and True Ministers in it: But they are ready to cry down the Reformed Churches as *False ones*, as having no True Sacraments, nor True Ministers, meerly because they are not under Episcopal Government. They vouch the *Papists* to be in a Sate of Salvation, but they tell the *Non-conformists* that they are Schismaticks, and in a State of Damnation.

It is roared out with great Vehemency, that *Separation from our Church* is *a damnable Sin*; but we don't hear them say with that Vehemency, that it is a *damnable Sin* to joyn with the Church of *Rome*, though that is a *Separation from our Church* with a Witness; yea, they hold that those who go over to the Church of *Rome*, go over to a *True Church*, and are in a *State of Salvation*. Who cannot but wonder at the strange Verdict that is given by these Men!

OF THE

Second POSITION

Held by ſome of our Divines;

Namely, *That the Miniſters of the Goſpel are True and Proper Prieſts, and have their True and Proper Sacrifice and Altar now on Earth.*

AN other Erroneous and Pernicious Notion which I have taken notice of in the Writings of ſome of our Eccleſiaſticks is, that There are *Real* and *Proper Prieſts* now under the Goſpel, that theſe Prieſts offer up in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper a *Proper Sacrifice*, and that the Communion-Table is an *Altar* properly ſo called. This was a Doctrine much in Faſhion in Archbiſhop *Laud*'s Days, and was ſtifly maintained by Dr. *Heylin*, his Grace's Chaplain, and other Writers of that Stamp. Even Mr. *Mede* was overborne with the Times, and freely confeſſes that he preached and publiſhed this Sort of Doctrine *,

* Book 4. *pag.* 1041.

that

that *he might not be thought addicted to the Puritan Faction*; *which is a Crime*, saith he, *if once fastened on a Man, can never be washed off.* To avoid this Imputation, and to gratify the then present Powers in the Church, he (otherwise a good Man) espoused this Opinion. Poor Gentleman, he was hard put to it; he must either be of the Metropolitan's Opinion, or he must never dine at *Lambeth*. Mr. *Thorndyke* openly professed this Doctrine; and so did Bishop *Taylor*. More lately Dr. *Bull* (afterwards Bishop) asserted the same; and Bishop *Beveridge* is very positive for it*; *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, saith he, *may as properly be called a Sacrifice as any that was ever offered, except that which was offered by Jesus Christ himself.*

But none are more Zealous in this Cause than our Nonjuring Brethren. Mr. *Dodwell*, after he had called the Eucharist a *mystical Sacrifice*, adds †, *This is far from diminishing either the Propriety of the Signification, or the Efficacy of the Thing:* So that he joyns with his Brethren, and holds the Lord's Supper to be a *Proper Sacrifice*. An other tells us, "That when Christ was on Earth || he offered up "the Sacrifice of his own Body and Blood, and "he hath ordained the *same Sacrifice* to be offered "up by his Priests on Earth, which are the Bread "and Wine: And these being offered up in Con-"junction with that Sacrifice, which he in Person "offers up in Heaven, becomes the *Same* to us, "and is so accepted by his Father". And again §, "God hath commanded and authorized his Priests "to offer up *Christ's crucified Body and Blood* upon "Earth, in Resemblance, and in Conjunction with "what he in Person offers in Heaven". So at an other

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* Sermon 8. Vol. 1.

† Discourse of one Altar and One Priesthood. p. 316.

|| Rehearsal, *Jan.* 14. 1707. § Rehearsal, *Aug.* 14.

Time*,

Time *, " As Chriſt ", ſaith he, " in his own Perſon " perpetually offers up the Sacrifice of himſelf once " made in the Preſence of his Father in Heaven, " to interpoſe between the Wrath of God and our " Sins, ſo hath he ordained Prieſts upon Earth to " repreſent his Perſon, and offer the *Same Sacrifice* " in Reſemblance and Figure under the holy Sym- " bols he hath commanded ; which therefore he " calls his own Body and Blood, granting us here- " by to be made Partakers of them Really and " Truly in an outward and viſible Manner, and " his Prieſts to offer them up to God on Earth, " in Conjunction with the ſame which he celebrates " in his own Perſon in Heaven, making both *one* " *and the ſelf-ſame Sacrifice* ".

An † other peremptorily aſſerts, That Biſhops and Presbyters are *Proper Prieſts*, yea, *Proper Sacrificing Prieſts*, and their Office is a *Proper Prieſthood*, and the Euchariſt is a *Proper Sacrifice*, and is to be offered on the Altar as a *True*, *Proper*, and *Material Sacrifice*, in a Contra-diſtinction to a *Figurative one*. And he would have an other Table erected in the Chancel on Purpoſe to ſet the Bread and Wine upon, before they are fetched to be placed on the Altar : For *this Practice will help the People to conceive how the Bread and Wine are their Oblation, and how it is made a Sacrifice by the Miniſtry of the Prieſt*. This is very nice, and we are beholden to him for the Diſtinction between *Oblation* and *Sacrifice*, though at other times he and his Brethren make them to be the ſame. The Dr. is ſo full of this Conceit, that he ſhews himſelf very much diſpleaſed becauſe this placing of Two Tables or Altars is not obſerved either in Cathedral or Parochial Churches. It is Pity he hath not the Regulating of theſe great Matters in his Power.

* Rehearſal, *Wedneſday* Aug. 1708.

† Dr. *Hickes*'s Chriſtian Prieſthood aſſerted.

But

But he goes as far as he is able, he openly and publickly asserts and maintains that *Priest* and *Altar* and *Sacrifice* are absolutely necessary under the Gospel, and no Church or Congregation of Christians can be without them.

I might take notice of what an other Writer saith; though he grants * *it is true that in Strictness of Speech there never was a Sacrifice, nor ever shall be any but Christ's alone*; yet he is pleased to contradict himself afterwards, and to tell us that † *None but the Priest can offer it* (the Eucharist) *up as a Proper Sacrifice*: And in an § other Place he speaks thus in the Name of his Brethren, *We think the Terms Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice very properly to belong to the Christian Religion.* An || other talks much of the *Sacerdotal Office as appropriated* to the Ministers of the Gospel; and would have *the Host lifted up*, in imitation of the Elevation of the Popish Sacrifice in the Mass. Then comes ‡ the Writer of the *Unbloody Sacrifice and Altar*, who after all the Attempts of others, and even after a former one of his own (for he was the Author of the *Propitiatory Oblation*) strikes up in defence of this Pretended Sacrifice, and offers up five hundred Sheets in its Service.

This is a Notion that is growing every day upon us, a Notion, which as it came from *Rome*, so is it like to conduct many thither. Wherefore I think my self concerned to take notice of this Dangerous Opinion, and check its Progress, and hinder the fatal Tendency of it. Accordingly I will distinctly prove, 1. That there are *no Priests properly so called* in the Times of Christianity. 2. That there is *no Sacrifice* of that kind. 3. That there is no *Altar*.

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* Mr. *Lewis*'s Apology for the Clergy of the Church of *England*. p. 500.
† Page 545. § Page 172.
|| Mr. *Scandaret*'s Sacrifice, the Divine Service. *p.* 246, 247.
‡ Mr. *Johnson*.

My

My Firſt Propoſition is that *in the Chriſtian Church there are no Prieſts properly ſo called.* This I will explain and prove in theſe following Particulars.

I. All Chriſtians and Believers are ſaid to be *Prieſts* in the Language of the New Teſtament. They are expreſsly called *a holy Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. Yea, the Chriſtian Church and whole Society of Believers are ſtiled *a Royal Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. which it is probable refers to *Exod.* xix. 6. where the *Jewiſh* Nation is called *a Kingdom of Prieſts.* So in *Rev.* i. 6. it is ſaid *he hath made us Prieſts unto God and his Father:* And the ſame is repeated *Rev.* v. 10. Whence we might argue that the *Laity* are *Prieſts* properly ſo called, as well as our Adverſaries argue from any other Places that the Miniſters of the Goſpel are proper *Prieſts:* but it is evident that this Title is not attributed to Believers and all holy Men in a *Proper* and *Strict* Senſe, but only by way of *Reſemblance* to the Prieſts under the Law.

Firſt, In reſpect of their *Separation.* Prieſts were Perſons ſet apart, and diſtinguiſhed from the reſt: and herein Believers are like them, they are taken out of the World, and apparently ſeparated from them in their Judgements, Thoughts, Deſires, Affections and Converſation. The Definition of a *Prieſt*, Heb. v. 1. is that *he is taken from among Men, and ordained in Things pertaining to God:* in a like Senſe all True Chriſtians are Prieſts, that is, they are choſen out from the reſt of Mankind, and ſet apart and dedicated to the Service of the Moſt High.

Secondly, In reſpect of *Conſecration.* The Legal Prieſts were Anointed and ſolemnly Inaugurated to their Office. And therein all holy Perſons under the Goſpel reſemble them, they having received the *Unction* of the Spirit of God, the Spiritual *Anointing* with ſaving Gifts and Graces.

Thirdly, The Moſaick Prieſts were to be without Blemiſh; and beſides, they were by their Office

to

to use Washings and Sprinklings, and several Kinds of Purification. In a resembling manner Believers are a Holy Priesthood, eminent for their Purity and Sanctity, and giving continual Proofs of these in their Lives and Actions.

Fourthly, In respect of their Employments, the most considerable of which under the Law was Sacrificing: and this is the Work of the Faithful, they have their peculiar Oblations to offer, they *offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. and these Spiritual Sacrifices are the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and all other Services and Offices of the Christian Religion which are enjoined them. Thus all Believers are Holy Priests unto God.

And this is a Notion which some of the Gentiles were not Strangers to; they represented a Good Man as one that is dignified with the Sacerdotal Office. The famous *Antoninus* tells us that such a one is * *a Priest and Minister of God. Hierocles* approves of this Denomination, and saith, *he is the Best Priest and Sacrificer that offers his Soul, and makes an Oblation of his Heart. Porphyrius* expresses himself after the same Rate, and so do some other Pagan Philosophers; in which (as in some other Things) they symbolize with the Stile of Scripture. But did they or any sober Men think that all Good Men are *Priests* in the *proper* and *strict Sense?* No certainly; they meant it only as a Common Title.

II. The Ministers of the Gospel, as *such*, are no where called *Priests* in the Writings of the New Testament. It is true, as they come under the Notion of Christians and Believers (of which I spoke before) they may claim this Name; but we do not find that the Writings of the Evangelists or Apostles allow it them as they are an Order or Rank of Men differenced from the Laity: which

* ἱερεύς τις καὶ ὑπηργὸς θεᾶν.

plainly

plainly intimates to us they ought not to make uſe of this Title. In the Beginning, and immediately after the Apoſtles there was no ſuch Language. The Apoſtles, eſpecially St. *Paul*, who in their *Epiſtles* had ſo frequent occaſion to mention the Miniſters and Diſpenſers of the Goſpel, and to ſpeak of the Nature of their Office, and who actually doth mention and ſpeak of theſe, would certainly at one time or other have called themſelves and the Miniſters of the Church Prieſts, and would have told us that their Function is a *Prieſthood:* but not one Syllable of this kind do we any where read, and therefore it is plain that their abſtaining from ſuch Language, which was neceſſary for them to uſe if they had thought themſelves or other Miniſters to be real Prieſts, is an Argument that that Denomination ought not to be fixed on them: Yea, it is reaſonable to think that the Holy Ghoſt, as foreſeeing that ſome Churchmen would challenge this Name, and make ill uſe of it, purpoſely avoided this Title in the Writings of the New Teſtament. No Biſhops or Presbyters are ever ſtiled here *Prieſts*, either by Chriſt or the Apoſtles, and the Doctrine of Prieſthood is no where aſſerted: whereas if there had been any ſuch thing, and if the Evangelical Miniſters had been properly Prieſts, it would have been expreſsly taught.

— Yea, it would have been very Seaſonable and Conguous to uſe this Stile, and to preach this Doctrine, becauſe hereby the Chriſtian Teachers would have ingratiated themſelves with the unbelieving *Jews*, who were their great Oppoſers, but were brought up in the Doctrine of *Prieſthood*. It had therefore been very uſeful, in order to propagating the Goſpel, not to conceal this Doctrine, but openly to declare it.

And if we conſider further that the Apoſtles in ſeveral Things thought fit to *Judaize*, and to comply with the Moſaick Uſages, and particularly

St.

St. *Paul* tells us that *unto the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews*, 1 Cor. ix. 20. that he might win that People to the Christian Faith, we cannot but conclude, that if he and other Apostles had thought themselves to be Real Priests, and their Ministry a Real and Proper Priesthood, they would have most readily proclaimed this to the *Jews*, in expectation that when that People saw that the Christian Religion and its Ministers did so plainly symbolize with the *Jewish* Oeconomy, this would inspire them with a good Opinion of the Evangelical Dispensation and the whole Christian Institution. So that it is plain that That very Reason which a late Writer before mentioned assigns why the Word *Priest* is not applied in any Part of the New Testament to the Ministers of the Gospel, is a good and Substantial Reason why that Term of *Priest* should have been made use of by the Apostles, and consequently should be found in the New Testament, if there were any such Person or Thing as *Priest* and *Priesthood* under the Gospel.

And here I might add further, that not only the Inspired Writers, but the Antient Fathers of the Church refrained from this Language. * *Bellarmine* himself acknowledges this, and saith it may be observed in the Writings of *Justin Martyr*, *Ignatius*, and *most of the Antientest Fathers*. Which very thing (as well as some others) may make us suspect the Authority and Genuineness of some of *Ignatius*'s Epistles, where the Word *Priests* is frequently applied to the Pastors of the Church. The same *Roman* Champion who tells us that the First Christians avoided the Word *Priesthood*, gives this as the Reason of it, *viz.* † because of the *Aaronic Priest-*

* De Cultu Sanctorum. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 4.

† Primos Christianos propter recentem memoriam Sacerdotii Aaronici abstinuisse non solùm à vocabulo Templi, sed etiam Sacerdotii, nè viderentur adhuc durare Judaicæ Ceremoniæ. *Ibid.*

hood,

hood, which was then freſh in their Memory, but aboliſhed; and therefore they abſtained from that Word, leſt the *Jewiſh* Rites and Ceremonies ſhould ſtill ſeem to be kept up. Some others of the Antients do but Rarely uſe this ſort of Speaking, they generally confine themſelves to the Language of the Scripture, where Churchmen are ſtiled moſt commonly *Presbyters*, or *Biſhops*, or *Miniſters* of *Chriſt*, or *Stewards*, or *Shepherds*, &c. but no where *Prieſts*. And this is the Safeſt Way of Speaking; for we may obſerve that ſome by changing the Scripture Phraſe and Expreſſion proceed to change its Doctrine: and it is apparently ſo in the preſent Caſe.

Let me add here under this Head the Practice of *our Own Church*; we may obſerve that She waves the Word *Prieſt* in one of her Verſicles after the Second Repetition of the Lord's Prayer in our Liturgy, *Endue thy Miniſters with Righteouſneſs*, which is borrowed from *Pſal.* cxxxii. 9. where the Words are theſe; *Let thy Prieſts be cloathed with Righteouſneſs*. In other Places of the *Common Prayer* the Word *Prieſt* is not uſed properly, but promiſcuouſly for *any Miniſter* that officiates, not one only who is in Prieſts Orders. In the *Conſtitutions* and *Canons* of our Church, when the moſt proper Language concerning Eccleſiaſtical Matters is to be uſed, the Word *Prieſt* is never made uſe of, but *Miniſter*. Yea, in that very Canon (the 82d) which treats of the *Adminiſtration of the Holy Communion*, the Word *Miniſter* is thrice uſed.

III. If the Miniſters of the Goſpel had the Title of *Prieſts* given them, yet it is not, it cannot be underſtood in a *ſtrict* and *proper Senſe*, and as if the *Prieſtly Office* were ſo appropriated to them, that others could not execute any Part of it. The contrary to which is what ſome of our Churchmen have ſtifly defended, and they begin to have many Proſelytes to their Opinion. Which one would wonder

wonder at when he considers what poor Arguments they make use of to assert their Doctrine. They tell us that in the *Jewish* Dispensation the Priest's Office was to *Bless the People*, and to *Pray and Interceed for them*, and to *offer Sacrifice for them*, and therefore now under the Christian Institution there are *Priests*, whose proper Business it is to discharge these Offices, and especially the last, which makes them Sacrificing Priests. The Answer to this is, 1st, The Thing which they assert concerning the *Jewish* Priests, is false. 2ly, If it were true, it would not follow thence that under the Gospel there must be such Priests as were under the Law.

First, The Thing they argue from is false, that is, that those foresaid Actions were *proper* to the Order of the Priests. As for *Blessing*, it did not belong wholly to the Priests, for we read that Parents and others exerted this Part of Religion, as in *Gen.* xxiv. 60. 2 *Sam.* viii. 10. We read that *Joshua* blessed *Caleb*, *Josh.* xiv. 13. *David* blessed the People and his Household, 2 *Sam.* vi. 18, 20. *Solomon* blessed the Congregation, 1 *Kings* viii. 14. The Congregation blessed *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* viii. 66. As for *praying for others* (which indeed was a sort of *blessing them*) that was not peculiar to Priests. We have frequent Examples of Laymens making Intercession for those who stood in need of it. King *Abimelech* was bid to restore *Abraham* his Wife with this Inducement, *He is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee*, Gen. xx. 7. This Patriarch is not mentioned as a *Priest*, but a *Prophet* only, who as such was able to interceed for *Abimelech* with good Success. So for *Sacrificing*, we read that this was not confined to the Person of a Priest. Before the *Jewish* Law *Abel* and *Jacob*, who were no Priests, offered Sacrifice, *Gen.* iv. 4. xlvi. 1. Under the Law others killed and offered the Sacrifice beside the Priest, *Lev.* iii. 1, 2, 3, 8. *Elkanah* and *Samuel* who were not at that time Priests, but Levites,

offered Sacrifice, 1 *Sam.* i. 3. vii. 10. So did *Gideon*, *David*, *Elijah*. Thus we ſee that though it belonged to the *Jewiſh* Prieſts to bleſs Men, to interceed for them with God, and to offer Sacrifice; yet it was not ſo *Proper* to them, as if all others were excluded from doing the like.

Secondly, If what they ſay of the *Jewiſh Prieſts* were true, it follows not that this is valid concerning the *Chriſtian Miniſters*; for then whatſoever we find to be Part of the *Prieſts Office* in the Old Teſtament, muſt be aſſerted to be the Office of the Miniſters under the Goſpel. A Prieſt's Office among the *Jews* was to call the People to the Publick Aſſemblies with Trumpets, *Numb.* x. 8. to carry the Ark on their Shoulders, *Deut.* xxxi. 9. *Joſ.* iii. 6. iv. 9. to take care of the Veſſels of the Tabernacle, *Numb.* iv. 16. to ſhut the Doors of the Temple, *Mal.* i. 10. Our Prieſts would be loth to ſubmit to ſuch ſervile Work as this; and I hope they would be backward to ſound the Trumpet of War, and excite to Battle, *Deut.* xx. 2. which was an other Thing required of the Prieſts. And it was their Work to kill Animals for Sacrifice, to cut them in pieces, and to kindle the Fire on the Altar, *Lev.* i. 6, 7. *Mal.* i. 10. All theſe were Sacerdotal Offices and Employments under the *Jewiſh* OEconomy; But who even of thoſe Perſons with whom our Buſineſs is at preſent are perſuaded that theſe belong to the Prieſtly Office now? Yet do they inſiſt with great Fierceneſs and Concernedneſs that the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian Prieſts* have the ſame Office.

One Thing I will here obſerve, that one of the Writers before mentioned urges with great Earneſtneſs that as *Offering up of Publick Prayers* was an Employment belonging to the *Jewiſh* Prieſt alone, and to none of the People, ſo now it appertains ſolely to the Chriſtian Prieſts, as he calls them. But here firſt he ſhews how little Inſight he hath into

into the *Jewish* Service, for it is a Vulgar Errour that the ordinary Service of the *Jewish* Church was performed by the Priests, that is, that these were the Persons that put up Publick Prayers in the Synagogues, and Preached to the People. This was none of their Priestly Office, but it was done by Persons educated in Schools for that purpose, and who there learned and studied the Scriptures, and so qualified themselves for that Work, as we may inform ourselves from *Maimonides* and other *Hebrew* Writers. Or, without going to them, we may consult what * one of our own Church, who is exquisitely Learned in all Eastern Antiquity, hath lately published in his most elaborate Discourse *of the Original and Right of Tythes.*

And again, the Person who now lies under our Censure betrays his Ignorance not only of the *Jewish Service*, but of our Own, when he affirms that *the Offering up of Publick Prayer appertains solely to the Christian Priests.* Is it not strange that a Minister of the Church of *England* should assert this, who is supposed to be acquainted with *our Liturgy*, and to know that the Church of *England* cannot maintain this Doctrine, because She enjoins the *People* to offer up the Publick Prayers *together* with the *Minister!* The General Confession at the Entrance of the Common Prayer is to be said of *the whole Congregation after the Minister*, saith the Rubrick. The People are enjoined *to repeat the Lord's Prayer with the Minister*, saith the Rubrick before the Lord's Prayer. The People have their *Responses* set them, which are *Prayers*; yea Prayers by themselves, and which the Minister hath no part in. Yea, they pray and interceed for the Minister, and are his *Priests*, if our Churchmen say right. Thus when the Minister saith, *The Lord be with you*, the People say, *And with thy Spirit:* and again in the Responses afterwards, *Bless thine Inheritance*, that is, Bless

* Dr. *Prideaux* Dean of Norwich.

thy Clergy, as the Commentators on this Part of the Liturgy tell us. Thus they are Interceſſors for the Clergy, as well as theſe are for them: therefore *Interceſſion* is not a mere *Sacerdotal* Work. In the *Litany* or General Supplication the *People* have their Share, not only of Repetition, but of ſome Words which they alone are to pronounce; as, *Spare us, Good Lord: Good Lord, deliver us: We beſeech thee to hear us, Good Lord: Grant us thy peace: Have mercy upon us: O Lord, deal not with us after our ſins: O Lord, ariſe, help and deliver us for thy name ſake: O Lord, ariſe, help and deliver us for thy honour: Graciouſly look upon our afflictions: Mercifully forgive the ſins of thy people: O Son of David, have mercy upon us: Graciouſly hear us, O Chriſt; graciouſly hear us, O Lord Chriſt.* So at the rehearſing of the Ten Commandments, the People are the only Perſons that are authorized to offer up Prayers: *they ſhall after every Commandment ask God mercy for their tranſgreſſion thereof for the time paſt, and grace to keep the ſame for the time to come:* and accordingly they pray thus, *Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this Law*; and at laſt, *Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all theſe Laws in our hearts, we beſeech thee.*

In the Communion Service the *General Confeſſion* is to be *ſaid by one of the Miniſters and all the People.* After which are Reſponſes proper to the People, *We lift them* (that is, our hearts) *unto the Lord*, &c. In the Office of *Confirmation* you will find that the Biſhop and the People join together both in *Bleſſing* and *Praying:* Yea, the People and the Children that are confirmed bleſs the Biſhop; for when he ſaith, *The Lord be with you*, they immediately add, *And with thy Spirit.* Then he ſaith, *Let us pray*, *us* Biſhop, People and Children. So in the *Form of Solemnizing Matrimony*, and in the *Order for the Viſitation of the Sick*, and the *Churching of Women*, it is ſaid, *Let us pray*, with *Reſponſes.* And this

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usual Form, *Let us pray*, which is so frequent in other Parts of our Liturgy, shews that the People and Minister are Joint Intercessors. It is absurdly said, Let *us* pray, if *They* do not pray as well as *He*. Lastly, in the *Form and Manner of making Deacons*, the Rubrick saith that *the Bishop shall with the Clergy and People say the Litany*.

And this is conformable to the old Practice in the Christian Church. *Justin Martyr*, who hath given us a particular Account of the manner of the Primitive Devotion, saith, * *We rise all of us together, and send up our Prayers to God.* So in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, as they are called, we are told that the Minister and People *prayed* † *all in common.* And this we find in those Liturgies which are pretended to be most Antient.

Yet a Learned Divine among us would make us believe that this is a Priviledge particularly indulged to the People of the Church of *England*. § *They*, saith he, *should esteem it, as in truth it is, a singular Priviledge that the Lay-members of the Church of England have a greater Share allotted to them in her Offices, than those of any other Persuasion I ever heard of.* Thus he compliments the People, and would represent it as an *Unusual Favour* that a Lay-man is permitted by our Church to join with the Minister in Prayer: but without doubt our Church looks upon it as their *Due*, and accordingly commands them to practise it.

Now, doth not all this baffle the fond Notion of those Men whom I have to do with at this time, who make *the Offering up of Publick Prayer* the Concern of a *Priest only*, and hold that this belongs to him alone? But how can the Prayer be said to be

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* Ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς πέμπομεν. Apol. 1.

† Κοινῇ πάντες. Lib. 8. Cap. 6, 8.

§ Dr. *Stanhope*'s Comment on the Gospel for the tenth Sunday after Trinity.

offered up only by the Prieſt or Miniſter, when the whole Congregation bear their Part, yea, their Peculiar Part, as is the Practice of our Church? If the Audible Praying in the Church be the diſtinguiſhing Character of a Prieſt, then it is certain that the Pariſh-Clerk and all the People are Prieſts, for they do this: but it will not be granted, I ſuppoſe, that both Miniſters and People are Prieſts: Yet *this* muſt be granted, and it follows from what hath been ſaid, that the former are not, nor can be called *Prieſts in the ſtrict and proper Senſe*, that is, as if it were Peculiar to them to offer up Prayers, and to interceed for the People; for I have proved from Scripture that others did this as well as the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, and I have ſhewed that our Own Church allows of, yea, commands the People's praying in the Publick Congregations. I ſpeak not this as if I took part with the late Author of the *Rights*, who takes away the Eccleſiaſtical Function, and gives it to the People. Far be it from me to diminiſh the Real Diſtinction between the *Clergy* and *Laity*, which all Chriſtian Churches aſſert to be Inviolable, and to be even Neceſſary to the conſtituting a ſettled Church. Nor do I deny that the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who are in a ſolemn manner ordained and ſet apart to the Sacred Functions, do *Authoritatively* and *by virtue of their peculiar Separation to their Office*, differ from all others who are not ſo ſeparated and ſet apart. But I only ſhew from the Mixture and Conjunction of the Miniſters and the Peoples *Interceſſions* (as well as their *Benedictions* before mentioned) that it is not our Church's Perſuaſion that theſe are *Proper to Prieſts*, or that her Miniſters are *Real Prieſts*, and that they ought to be called ſo in propriety of Speech.

IV. The Reaſon of the Thing will carry it that *this Name* ſhould not be made uſe of by us. For though it is true the *Hebrew* Word for a *Prieſt* contains nothing of Sacrificing in it, but is a Word

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of Honour and Dignity; and because the Fathers and Princes of Families were the first Priests, it is applied both to *Priests* and *Princes*. The *Greek* and *Latin* Words for a *Priest* signify not a Sacrificer, but only a *Holy* Person, his Office being about *Sacred* Things. Both the *Latin* and *Greek* Words are sometimes applied in a large Sense, to denote a great and peculiar Eminency in the Persons concerning whom they are used: Thus the Chief Leaders and Heads among the old Philosophers were stiled *Priests*, as *Diogenes Laertius*, in his *Proem*, relates. A Poet is called by *Ovid* a *Priest of the Muses*: And a Professor of the Civil Law hath the Title of a *Priest of the Law* given him by *Justinian*. And as for our *English* Word *Priest*, there is nothing offensive in it of itself, for it is derived from and is an Abbreviature of the French *Prestre* or *Prêtre*, and the German *Priester*, which are from the Latin *Presbyter*, an *Elder*. But though I say it be thus, yet my Lord *Bacon*'s Observation on the Word is very remarkable, "This may be said "(saith he) that it is a good Rule in Translation, "never to confound that in one Word in the "Translation which is precisely distinguished in "two Words in the Original; and therefore seeing "the Word πρεσβύτερος and ἱερεὺς be always distinguished in the Original, and the one used for "a *Minister*, the other for a *Sacrificer*; the Word "*Priest* being made common to both, whatsoever "the Derivation be, yet in use it confoundeth the "*Minister* with the *Sacrificer*". This may convince us how Improper it is to use the Word *Priest* for a Minister of the Gospel.

But there are several other Reasons that may encline us to disuse it; as first, because it is the known Title of a *Pagan Sacrificer*, and on that account we should be backward to make use of that Name in our Evangelical Worship, and to apply it to the Ministers of the Gospel, who are to abhor the Sacrifices

crifices and Offerings of the Gentiles. Secondly, It is the Title of a *Jewiſh Sacrificer*: and therefore when we give our ſelves the Name of *Prieſts*, we revive the Old Prieſthood of the Law, which is a denying Chriſt to be come. On this account *Prieſt* is an ill Word, and may inſtill a falſe Notion of the Evangelical Miniſtry, as if it ſucceeded in the place of the *Jewish* Prieſthood, and were of the like nature; and as if we had a Material Altar to offer Sacrifice upon. Thirdly, It is the Title of a *Popiſh Sacrificer*; and to call us *Prieſts* is to keep up the memory of the *Popish Prieſthood* which was brought into the Chriſtian Church after it was groſsly corrupted. It is beſt to abandon ſuch Names and Words as ſerve only to beget falſe Opinions of the Chriſtian Religion, and to foſter Superſtition, as if there were ſtill Sacrifices offered on the Altar. We have nothing to do with a Sacrificing Prieſt, or the Sacrifice of the Maſs, or Altars, and therefore let us lay aſide Words which are apt to convey theſe Apprehenſions to us. And let us not ſo far gratify our Adverſaries as to comply with them in the Expreſſions which they uſe, but let us diſtinguiſh our ſelves from them even in our Phraſe and Language.

My meaning is not that we ſhould uſe no Words or Names in Religion that are made uſe of by Papiſts, for then the *Church*, the *Sacraments*, the *Trinity*, and the Generality of thoſe Things that appertain to Religion muſt not be mentioned by us: But this I intend, that thoſe Words which are uſed in the Church of *Rome*, and are ill applied by them, and are of their own nature apt to beget ill Notions in the Minds of Proteſtants, as the Words *Prieſt*, *Sacrifice*, *Altar*, ought to be laid aſide; and others, which are not liable to be miſunderſtood and miſapplied, ſhould be taken up in their room. The Words of the Learned *Stillingfleet* are very appo-

appoſite here * "When in the Primitive Church, "(ſaith he) the Name of *Prieſt* came to be attri- "buted to the Goſpel Miniſters, in proceſs of Time "Corruptions increaſing in the Church, thoſe "Names that were uſed by the Chriſtians by way "of Analogy and Accommodation, brought in the "Things themſelves primarily intended by thoſe "Names: So by the Metaphorical Names of "*Prieſts* and *Altars* at laſt came up the Sacrifice of "the Maſs, without which they thought the "Names of *Prieſt* and *Altar* were inſignificant".

Before I quit this Firſt Part of my Diſcourſe, I will deſire the Reader to take notice how the Scriptures are abuſed by ſome late Writers in order to defend the Uſe of the Word *Prieſt*, and the Propriety of it under the Goſpel. One endeavours to prove that Chriſtian Miniſters are Prieſts and ought to be called ſo from *Rev.* ii. 9. *I know the Blaſphemy of them who ſay they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan*; "For (ſaith he) *Jews* "and *Synagogue* have relation to *Prieſts*; and "therefore the Chriſtian Miniſters are Prieſts". So Ridiculous is this Doctor in advancing his Cauſe. He might as well have ſaid, *Jews* and *Synagogue* have relation to *Circumciſion*, therefore this is to be practiſed by Chriſtians now. He as ſolidly infers from *Rev.* i. 20. *The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches*; and from *Rev.* viii. 2. *I ſaw the Seven Angels which ſtood before God*, that the Angels that is, Biſhops are *Prieſts*; as if in the Name of *Angels* were included the Sacerdotal Office. An † other Writer moſt wretchedly perverts and abuſes *Eph.* v. 32. *This is a great Myſtery, but I ſpeak concerning Chriſt and the Church*; upon which Words he tells us, *that the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of the Myſtical Union and Repreſentation of Jeſus Chriſt by the Chriſtian Biſhop at the Chriſtian Altar*: therefore there

* Irenic. part 2. chap. 6. † Scanderet, chap. 4. page 95.

are

are Prieſts, Sacrificing Prieſts under the Goſpel. And a great deal of ſuch wild and impertinent Stuff doth he trouble the Reader with, and at the ſame time profanely handles the Sacred Writ.

He would ſeem to argue, chap. 3. page 87. "It "is reaſonable to believe [ſaith he] that as long as "we have a Prieſt in Heaven, we may have Prieſts "upon Earth in God's Church. As we have a "Prieſt to appear for us there, with his very Body "and Blood as a Sacrifice for Sin, ſo we muſt have "a Prieſt upon Earth to appear for us here with "the Sacrifice of the Repreſentations of them"; in an other Place he ſaith, *with the ſame Sacrifice.* But this only ſhews that this Writer is as bad at Reaſoning, as he is at Interpreting of Scripture: For if this be a good Argument, Becauſe there is a Prieſt above, therefore there muſt be a Prieſt below, then we may as rationally diſcourſe thus; Becauſe there is a King above, who was Inaugurated into his Kingdom when he aſcended into Heaven, and ſat down at the Right-hand of his Father; therefore there muſt be a King here below in the Church of Chriſt, to repreſent the King who is in Heaven, and to be his Vicegerent on Earth, to rule and govern all his Subjects here. This is every whit as Reaſonable and Accountable as that other Notion. But there are few Perſons of any Sobriety and Judgement that will allow of this way of Arguing, and conſequently not of that before mentioned. I know of none that will approve of either but the Bigots of the *Roman* Church, who reckon the Pope to be the Vicar and Repreſentative of Chriſt both as he is Prieſt and as he is King: and this it is likely is very acceptable to the Author of the foregoing Reaſoning. But how derogatory this is to the Prieſthood and Regality of Chriſt, cannot but be diſcerned by every unprejudiced Eye; for as Chriſt is our only Spiritual Prieſt, ſo he is our only Spiritual King, and no other deſerves that Name.

To

To be brief and decisive, it is plain that no Bishops or Presbyters, no Ministers in Christ's Church can be Real and Proper Priests; for we read but of *two Orders* of *Priests* in Scripture, that of *Aaron*, and the other of *Melchisedeck*. They cannot be of the first Order, for Levitical Priests were to offer Bloody Sacrifices, but our Adversaries themselves own that such are not offered now. They cannot be of the second Order, for none but Christ was of that: Therefore I conclude that there are no *Proper Priests* under the Gospel.

My Second Proposition is, that *there are no Sacrifices properly so called under the Gospel Dispensation.* Here (as before) I will proceed by these Gradual Steps:

I. It is not to be denied that the Chief Offices of Devotion, and the Great Duties of Christianity, are called *Sacrifices* in the Apostolical Writings. Christians are stiled *a holy Priesthood to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. that is, Sacrifices of *Prayer* and *Thanksgiving*, Heb. xiii. 15. of *Alms and Good Works*, Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. and we are commanded *to present our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*, Rom. xii. 1. So all other Duties and Performances of Christians may be called Sacrifices, because thereby we offer up ourselves to God and his Service. And as for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, here are offered those particular Sacrifices before mentioned, namely, Prayer, Thanksgiving, and Alms. And here in the most solomn manner we present and offer our selves to God a living Sacrifice acceptable to him. For these Reasons the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be called a *Sacrifice*. And besides, it may have that Denomination, as it represents and calls to remembrance the One All-sufficient Sacrifice made on the Cross by Christ's Body being broken or pierced, and his Blood being shed.

ſhed. We may call it a *Commemorative Sacrifice*, as ſeveral Proteſtant Writers have done, but it is an Improper Way of ſpeaking; for it is the Commemoration of a Sacrifice, not a Sacrifice in any other Senſe than Prayer and other Religious Duties are called Sacrifices, Spiritual Sacrifices.

II. Though in this forementioned Senſe the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be called a Sacrifice, yet it is obſervable that this Name is not given to it any where in the Writings of the New Teſtament, though this Sacrament is often mentioned there. It is not ſtiled a Sacrifice either at the firſt Inſtituting of it, or any time afterwards. Yea, it is worth our obſerving that in the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, which purpoſely treats of the *Prieſthood* of Chriſt, the Sacrificing of him by the Prieſts on Earth could not have been omitted, if there had been any ſuch thing. Wherefore the Omiſſion of it there plainly informs us that the Sacrifice which the Church of *Rome* and ſome of our Divines talk of, is a mere Fiction. It is true the Romaniſts and they quote a Text in the New Teſtament which they fancy ſpeaks of this Sacrifice; for when our Saviour ſaid, *This do in remembrance of me*, Luke xxii. 19. they interpret *doing* to be *ſacrificing*. Which diſtorted Senſe if we ſhould admit of, yet it makes nothing for the Cauſe; for unleſs it had been ſaid, *Do me*, that is, according to their Notion, *Sacrifice me, for the Bread is my Real Body, and the Wine is my Real Blood*, it is nothing to the purpoſe: But we ſee that *this*, not *me*, is the Word here uſed, which ſhews that the *doing* hath a direct and plain reference to the *eating the Bread* and *drinking the Wine* juſt before mentioned, and not to Chriſt. So Vain and Impertinent is the Gloſs of thoſe Men on theſe Words of the Inſtitution.

One of the Writers before mentioned endeavours to prove that Chriſt *ſacrificed* his Body and Blood

Blood in the *Eucharist* from those Words in *Luke* xxii. 19, 20. *This is my Body which is given for you, this Cup is the new Testament in my Blood which is shed for you:* For, *this is my Body which is given for you*, is the same with *this is my Body which is sacrificed for you*, and so *shed* is the same with *sacrificed* *. But if this be the meaning, it is strange that in all those Places where *the giving of Christ's Body* is expressed in other Words, not one of them conveys to us the Notion of *sacrificing*; and it is unpardonable that he should thus impose upon us, when he never so much as attempts to shew that *giving*, in any other Place of Scripture, or in any other Writings, signifies to *sacrifice*. And furthermore he tells us that διδόμενον *given* in the foresaid Text is to be understood of the Time then present; "For it was (he saith) in the *Eucharist* which "Christ celebrated with his Apostles that he sacri-"ficed himself"; and therefore this Author saith, *It will be a very hard Task to prove that Christ made a Sacerdotal Oblation of himself on the Cross.* These are his very Words, page 86. whence it is plain that he is willing to drop the Orthodox and Catholick Doctrine of *Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross*, which all the Christian World hath maintained and professed, merely to favour the Opinion which he hath taken up, *viz.* that Christ sacrificed himself in the Eucharist which he celebrated with his Apostles.

See what mad Conceits these Men will entertain, to promote their Doctrine of a Material and Proper Sacrifice in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper! To establish this, they will deny that our Saviour made a Sacrifice of himself on the Cross. It is strange to see what mortal Creatures will do, what Absurdities they will invent to uphold their Notions which they have espoused. And see how this Writer contradicts himself: He had all along before

* *Johnson's* Unbloody Sacrifice.

asserted

aſſerted the Euchariſt to be an *Unbloody Sacrifice*, and yet now by this Arguing, which he uſes, he clearly aſſerts it to be a *Bloody* One: For if Chriſt's Body was actually ſacrificed in the Sacrament which he celebrated with his Apoſtles, and if his Blood was at that very time ſhed, the Sacrament was undoubtedly a *Bloody Sacrifice*. I need ſay no more upon this Author's citing the aboveſaid Text out of St. *Luke*. But from this fooliſh Attempt we may gather, that theſe Men are not able to produce one ſingle Text where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is called a Sacrifice, or where the Biſhops, or Presbyters, or any Miniſters of the Goſpel as ſuch, are commanded to offer any Sacrifice.

If thoſe Words in 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. *Ye are a holy Prieſthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices*, had been ſpoken of Clergymen particularly; they might have had ſome ſhew of Pretenſion for what they contend now for: But it is manifeſt, (as hath been proved already) that this is ſpoken of Chriſtians in General, of all *Jewiſh* Converts, and therefore the *Epiſtle* hath the Epithet of *General* given to it. Hence 'tis as eaſy, as rational, to infer, that the Holy Spirit in the New Teſtament deſigned to inſtruct us in this Great Truth, that the Miniſters of the Chriſtian Church are no *Sacrificers*: Otherwiſe there would have been ſome one Text at leaſt where this is expreſſed or fairly intimated. But we find no ſuch thing.

III. If the Sacrament were any where called a *Sacrifice*, it could not be underſtood to be a Real and Proper Sacrifice, but a Metaphorical one only, ſuch a one as is Repreſentative of the True and Proper one. That it could not be conſtrued to be a Proper Sacrifice, I prove thus: A Proper Sacrifice implies theſe Two Things, *Mactation* or *Slaying*, and *Oblation*. A Proper Sacrifice is a Bloody Sacrifice, ſome Living Creature ſlain and offered up.

up. The Papists themselves hold, that the Essential Notion of a Sacrifice is the Destroying of it: Now, there is no such thing in the Sacrament, there is no shedding of Christ's Blood, there is no killing or destroying him. Therefore here is no True and Proper Sacrifice, because Sacrificing implies Slaying in order to offering up. Or if you shall say, The Bread and Wine are *destroyed*, being eaten and drunk, and so they have the Nature of a Sacrifice; yet you must remember that the *Destruction* must be of some *Living* Thing, for that is a Proper Sacrifice, but it is impossible to apply this to the Bread and Wine.

Then as to *Oblation*, where do we read, or where is it so much as intimated, that the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist are to be *offered up to God*, which is the very same with the *Offering up of Christ's Real Body*; for these Men hold, that the *Vertue* of the Bread and Wine is the very *Same* with that of Christ's Body and Blood, and therefore when one is offered, the other must be said to be so too. Whence it follows, that our Saviour is Personally and Bodily offered in every Celebration of that Ordinance, and consequently not *once* only, as the Apostle urges in express Terms, *He offered himself once*, which is no less than four times repeated, *Heb.* vii. 27. ix. 26, 28. x. 10. As if it were thus inculcated and pressed over and over again, by a Prophetick Spirit against the Popish Practice of the Mass, and the Tenet which is now received among us, That Christ in the Lord's Supper is offered a Sacrifice by the Priest. If a Doctrine be but * once only asserted in Scripture, this is enough to force a Belief of it; but there is a *great Number* of Texts which expressly maintain and confirm the Doctrine which I am insisting

* In divinis rebus non frequentiùs dicta, sed tantùm dicta sufficiunt. *Hilar.* de Trin. lib. 4.

upon,

upon, and therefore we cannot, without great Violence to our Judgements, make Oppoſition againſt it. Yet notwithſtanding this plain and often reiterated Determination of the Apoſtle in this Epiſtle, that Chriſt was offered, and can be offered but *once*, our Adverſaries inſiſt that Chriſt is and ought to be daily offered in the Maſs; and that the very ſame Body and Blood, that is, the ſame as to their Virtue and Energy, which were ſacrificed on the Croſs, are ſacrificed on the Altar. Than which, nothing can more derogate from the Efficacy of the Sacrifice of our One Eternal Prieſt, who by that *One Sacrifice* made a perfect Atonement and Satisfaction for us; for if that Offering of himſelf once, was Satisfactory, there is no need of repeating it: And therefore, by our Repetition of it, we infinitely detract from the Vertue and Merit of his Oblation of himſelf. This muſt needs be, becauſe it is held by the Papiſts and their Friends among us, that the Prieſts offering of Chriſt on the Altar, hath *the ſame Vertue and Efficacy* with that which was made on the Croſs. Indeed they cannot think otherwiſe, ſo long as they hold both of them to be *Propitiatory Sacrifices*. However, it is plain that the Writers among us before-quoted, who hold that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a *Propitiatory Sacrifice*, hold the very Doctrine taught by the Council of *Trent*, Seſſ. 22. and is one of the Articles of their Creed: And they teach it with a Vengeance; for all that disbelieve it are *Curſed*, and their Souls are pronounced to be in a State of Damnation, and their Bodies are to be ſent to the Flames. And this very Execution the *Romaniſts*, I doubt not, would be at again here if they had their Will.

As before I obſerved that the Apoſtle in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, takes no Notice of any *Prieſthood* belonging to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, ſo I cannot but obſerve that he is wholly

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silent concerning any *Peculiar Sacrifice* that they are to offer: He mentions not a *Second Offering* of Christ by Evangelical Priests; though if there had been any such thing, he had fair Occasion here to speak of it. But instead of that he tells us, that our Saviour *put away Sin by the Sacrifice himself*, Heb. ix. 26. *He offered One Sacrifice for Sins*, Heb. x. 12. And *by this One Offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, ver. 14. But how comes it to pass that the Priest's Offering of Christ in the Sacrament, which is held by our Writers to be as Necessary as that on the Cross, is not mentioned here by the Apostle? What! Not a Word of this main Point of Christianity, and Prop of the Christian Church, as it is esteemed and declared to be by these Men? Is there a Necessity of offering this Sacrifice daily for the expiating of our Sins, and yet is this *Epistle* wholly silent about it, which treats of the Evangelical *Priesthood* of our Saviour, and his Offering himself for us according to his Sacerdotal Office? What can we resolve this Silence into but this; that this daily Sacrifice of the *Mass* which some would thrust upon us, is a mere Delusion and Imposture, and hath no Foundation in the Word of God, but is inconsistent with it? For we see that according to these Sacred Writings Christ's Sacrifice is but *One*, and offered no more than *Once*; and therefore those delude the Christian World, who would perswade Men that our Saviour must be sacrificed for them every Day. Such are confuted by the Epistle of St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, and by the other Great Apostle St. *Peter*, who acquaints us that *Christ hath* ONCE *suffered for Sins*, 1 Epist. iii. 18. and therefore he is not capable of Suffering or being Sacrificed a second Time, much less a thousand Times in one Day, which is the Thing asserted by some.

To conclude this Head I am now upon, nothing is more evident than that the Sacrament which our

Bleſſed Saviour inſtituted is not a True, Proper, and Real Sacrifice; for either it is the *ſame* that was offered on the Croſs, or *not the ſame:* If it is the ſame, then it is a *Bloody Sacrifice*, but the *Roman* Catholicks themſelves do not allow this. If it be *not the ſame*, but an other, then it cannot be *Propitiatory*; (which yet is aſſerted by all thoſe that hold it to be a Sacrifice;) for there is no Sacrifice of that Nature but Chriſt himſelf, he being of infinite Merit, but no other is ſuch. This I conceive is a Demonſtration of what I contend for.

I will add this further, Chriſt himſelf did not offer his Body and Blood as a Sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, when he himſelf in his own Perſon adminiſtred it to his Apoſtles. I need not prove this, for if he offered himſelf at his Supper, it was unneceſſary and ſuperfluous to do it afterwards, namely, on the Croſs. Now then, is it not ſtrange that a Prieſt ſhould have a Power to ſacrifice Chriſt in the Lord's Supper, and yet Chriſt himſelf did not then make a Sacrifice of his Body and Blood? Certainly, if there was no ſuch thing as a Sacrifice in the firſt Inſtitution and Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper, we cannot rationally think that there is any ſuch thing ſince, eſpecially when we never read that Chriſt gave it in Charge to his Apoſtles and their Succeſſors to offer Bread and Wine, which is ſaid to be Chriſt's Body and Blood, as a Sacrifice in the Sacrament: There is not one Word in the Sacred Writings that favours this.

IV. We have Reaſon then to believe that the *Antient Fathers* of the Chriſtian Church, who ſometimes call the Euchariſt a *Sacrifice*, do not mean it in a Proper Senſe. Though it is not to be denied that ſome of thoſe Writers have, in ſeveral Points, groſsly erred, and their extravagant Language about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not to be allowed of, yet, generally ſpeaking, the Places in their Writings, where the Sacrament is called

by

by them an * *Oblation* or a *Sacrifice*, are to be accounted for in this following Manner.

1. Sometimes it may be thought that they use these Words on Purpose to comply with the *Heathens*, and to allure them to Christianity, as *Origen*, *Eusebius*, and others acquaint us; for the Antient Christians were perswaded, that the using of the same Terms and Expressions which the *Gentiles*, with whom they conversed, constantly used, would be serviceable towards their Conversion. And there was some Regard to the *Jews* also; and accordingly as the time of Christ's Resurrection was called the *Passover*, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost was stiled *Pentecost*, so the *Eucharist* was called a *Sacrifice*, and the *Presbyters* were sometimes termed *Priests*. This seemed to be harmlessly done at first, and might be thought likewise to be in Imitation of the Stile of Holy Scripture, where we find the Christian Worship expressed sometimes in *Jewish* Terms, and with Allusion to the Levitical Service.

2. *Sacrifice* and *Oblation* in the Writings of the Antients are meant of Offering of Alms on the Table where the Sacrament was celebrated. For in those Days there was a Common Stock which was made by the voluntary Offerings and Contributions of the Faithful; and the Ministers and the Poor were provided for from this Bank. None came to the solemn Assemblies without some Gift for the Maintenance of the Service; and from these charitable Oblations, the whole Administration of the Sacrament (which was the principal Part of that Service) was called a *Sacrifice* or *Offering*.

3. It had that Name more especially from the Antient Usage of the Primitive Christians, who brought Bread and Wine, and laid them on the Table for the Use of the Lord's Supper.

* Θυσία, προσφορὰ, sacrificium, oblatio, hostia.

4. At this ſolemn Time were offered up to God Prayers and Praiſes, which are Spiritual Sacrifices, and ſo called. *Juſtin Martyr*, who lived in the Second Century, and who hath left a particular Account of the Sacred Adminiſtrations in the Chriſtian Church at that Time, hath theſe remarkable Words, Ὅτι μὼ ἔν γ' Εὐχαὶ γ' Εὐχαειςίαι ἀπο τῶν ἀξίων γενόμθαι τελειαὶ μόναι γ' ἐυαρεςαὶ εἰσίν τῷ Θεῷ θυσίαι, &c. —— Ταῦτα μόνα γ' Χειςιανοι παρέλαβον ποιεῖν, γ' ἐπ' ἀναμνήσει τῆς Ἰροφῆς αὐτῶν ξηρᾶς τε γ' ὑγρᾶς, ἐν ᾗ γ' τὸ Πάθος ὁ πέπονθε υἱὸς θεῦ θέῳ μέμνηται· Dialog cum Tryph. In *Engliſh* thus; "Prayers and Thankſgivings made "by worthy Men are the only perfect Sacrifices, and "acceptable to God.—Chriſtians have been taught to "offer no other even in the Memorial of their Food "both dry and moiſt (the Bread and Wine in the "Sacrament) in which the Paſſion of the Son of God "is commemorated". Thus it is *Prayers* and *Praiſes* in the Euchariſt that make it a *Sacrifice*. Thence ſaith *Origen*, (Cont. Celſ. *lib.* 8.) *We eat the Bread that is offered*, μετ' ἐυχαειςίας γ' ἐυχῆς, *with Thankſgiving and Prayer*. The foreſaid *Juſtin* ſpeaks thus of the Manner of celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; *Bread and a Cup of Wine and Water are offered to the Miniſter* (the Προεςῶς) *which being received by him, he offers Praiſe and Glory to the Father of all Things through the Name of the Son and the Holy Ghoſt*. Apolog. ad Antonium. Here is a double Offering, namely, of the Elements to the Miniſter, and of Thanks to God for them: but no other Offering is mentioned. *Oblations for the Dead* are often mentioned in *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, but they are no other than Thankſgivings offered up to God at the Commemoration of the deceaſed Saints who had laid down their Lives for Chriſt.

5. *To Sacrifice* is a Metaphorical Word among the firſt Chriſtians, to expreſs all the Offices and Acts of Chriſtianity; not only Prayer and Praiſes, but

but Repentance, and Obedience, and a Godly Life, have this Denomination; which they borrowed from the New Testament, as I have shewed before. And the Old Testament uses the same Language, and at the same time acquaints us, that they are not *Proper Sacrifices*, because they are opposed to such. 1 *Sam.* xv. 22. *Obedience is better than Sacrifice.* Psal. li. 16, 17. *Thou desirest not Sacrifice, else would I give it: The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit.* Hos. vi. 6. *I desired Mercy, and not Sacrifice:* But these are Spiritual Sacrifices, and thence this Name obtains among Christians. We are told by St. *Cyprian* that * *all Christians offer unto God a daily Sacrifice, being ordained of him Priests of Holiness.* All Believers are *Priests*, and they all of them are *daily Sacrificers*, in as much as they continually live holy Lives. Yea, according to the Stile of the Antients *Preaching* the Word of God is Sacrificing. In *Epiphanius*, † *to sacrifice the Gospel*, is to be a Preacher of it. *This is my Priesthood, to preach and to evangelize: This is the Sacrifice I offer*, saith St. *Chrysostom* ||. It is no Wonder then that this Father and others, who thus *largely* use the Word, apply it to the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.* One of them calls it a *True Sacrifice*, as you shall hear anon: What then? So doth St. *Augustine* call *every Good Work* §. Is it therefore to be understood that the Sacrament or any other Good Work is a Sacrifice strictly and properly so called? No certainly, and this all our Adversaries must agree to.

That the *Fathers* and most pious Christians of the Primitive Church had no such Meaning, I will

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* Omnes qui à Christi nomine dicuntur Christiani, offerunt Deo quotidianum Sacrificium, ordinati à Deo sanctimoniæ Sacerdotes. *De Unct. Chrism.*

† Hæres. 79. || Homil. 29. in Epist. ad Roman.

§ Sacrificium Verum est omne opus quod agitur ut sancta Societate inhæreatur Deo, &c. *De Civ. Dei.* lib. 10. c. 6.

largely prove from ſundry Paſſages in their known Writings, wherein they expreſsly own the Euchariſt to be only a *Memorial* or *Sign* of the Sacrifice of Chriſt. I will begin with St. *Cyprian*, who calls the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper a * *True and Full Sacrifice*; but in the very ſame Place he ſaith, *Chriſt* † *commanded it to be done in Remembrance of him.* Which explains the Meaning of this Father; for if it be in Remembrance of him, then it cannot be a Proper Sacrifice, as we learn from *Euſebius*'s remarkable Words ‖; *Chriſt made a Sacrifice unto his Father for our Salvation, giving Command to us to offer continually to God a Remembrance inſtead of a Sacrifice.* Where we ſee theſe two are plainly diſtinguiſhed, a *Memorial* and a *Sacrifice.* St. *Ambroſe* inſtructs us in this Great Truth, by leaving us this following Paſſage; § *Do we not offer every Day? Yes truly, we offer, but it is by making Remembrance of Chriſt's Death. We do not, as the Prieſt, offer an other Sacrifice, but the very ſame always, or rather we perform a Remembrance of a Sacrifice.* He intimates, that they ſometimes called the Sacrament a *Sacrifice*, but lets us know how it is to be underſtood. You ſee he corrects himſelf, and to explain his Mind fully, he tells us, that though we may call the Euchariſt a Sacrifice, yet we ought rather to ſpeak properly, and to ſay, that it is not a Sacrifice in a ſtrict Senſe, but only the Commemoration of that *one Sacrifice* which is *ſtrictly* ſo called. An other Eminent Father tells us, that the Euchariſt is ‡ ἀνάμνησις τῆς θυσίας, a Me-

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* Sacrificium verum & plenum. *Epiſt. ad Cæcil.* 63.

† Hoc fieri in ſui commemorationem præcepit.

‖ Demonſtrat. Evang. *lib.* 2. *c.* 10.

§ Nonne per ſingulos dies offerimus? Offerimus quidem, ſed Recordationem facientes mortis ejus. —— Non aliud Sacrificium, ſicut Pontifex, ſed id ipſum ſemper offerimus, magis autem Recordationem ſacrificii operamur. *In Epiſt. ad Hebr.* c. 10. v. 4.

‡ Chryſoſt. Hom. 17. in Epiſt. ad Hebr.

morial

morial of the Sacrifice of Christ; and in an other Place it is stiled by him Πνευματικὴ θυσία a *Spiritual Sacrifice*, to distinguish it from a Bodily, Material, and Proper Sacrifice. And when I am citing St. *Chrysostom*, I will observe this to the Reader, which I conceive is much to our present purpose, that in his Homilies on the 49th and 95th Psalms he enumerates Ten distinct Kinds of *Sacrifices* which Christians are obliged to offer to God; but he speaks not one Word of the Sacrifice of the Altar that our Modern Divines talk of. The like I might observe of *Cyrill of Alexandria*, who in all his seventeen Books of *Adoration* saith nothing of this Sacrifice, no not in that Book which bears this Title, Ὅτι χρὴ προσάγειν ἡμᾶς θυσίας πνευματικὰς καὶ δωροφορίας θεῷ· That we ought to offer to God Spiritual Sacrifices and Gifts. Nay, it is farther remarkable that this Sacrifice is not mentioned by this Writer in his 10th Book against *Julian*, though there he recites all the Spiritual Sacrifices.

But I must remember to return to the expres's Testimonies of the Fathers, who confute the Notion of a Sacrifice in the Eucharist by calling this Sacrament a Sign or Remembrance of a Sacrifice, namely, that of Christ on the Cross. I need add no other than St. *Augustine*, who is very clear in this Point, * *That* (saith he) *which at this day in the Church is generally called a Sacrifice, is the Sign of the true Sacrifice.* Now, if it is but a Sign or Representation of the True Sacrifice, it is not the True Sacrifice itself. And these Words of his are remarkable, and give us light into the Matter, *Christ* (saith he) *is sacrificed in the Sacrament*; and then he gives this account of it: † *If the Sacraments*

* Illud quod ab omnibus appellatur Sacrificium, Signum est veri Sacrificij. *De Civ. Dei. l.* 10. *c.* 5.

† Si Sacramenta quandam Similitudinem earum rerum quarum Sacramenta sunt non haberent, omnino Sacramenta non essent: ex hac autem

had not a certain Similitude of thoſe Things whereof they are Sacraments, they would be no Sacraments at all; now, it is for this Similitude or Reſemblance that they oftentimes bear the Names of the Things themſelves. This is the Reaſon according to St. *Auguſtine* why the Lord's Supper is called a *Sacrifice*, namely, becauſe it is a Similitude or Repreſentation of the Sacrifice of Chriſt on the Croſs. Again he thus ſaith, * *The Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt's Sacrifice was before his coming promiſed and uſhered in by Sacrifices of Likeneſs; afterwards at his Paſſion it was performed in Truth and Reality; but now after his Aſcenſion it is celebrated by a Sacrament of Remembrance.* I will add one Place more out of this Excellent Father; † *Chriſt's Blood was ſhed for us in the One and only True Sacrifice:* Whence it is evident that the Euchariſt is not a True and Proper Sacrifice; for if that on the Croſs where Chriſt's Blood was ſhed was the One and only True Sacrifice, then that of the Euchariſt cannot be an other. Thus I think it ſufficiently appears from theſe Expreſs Quotations out of the Antient Fathers that whenever they call the Lord's Supper a Sacrifice, they do not mean any ſuch Thing as a Proper Sacrifice.

To back this, we have the Authority and Example of our own Church. She doth not any where call the Sacrament a Sacrifice; there is nothing of this Language in the *Articles* of our Church: not a Word of it in our *Homilies:* nay,

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autem Similitudine plerumque etiam ipſarum rerum Nomina accipiunt. *Epiſt.* 23.

* Hujùs Sacrificij caro & ſanguis ante adventum Chriſti per victimas ſimilitudinum promittebatur; in Paſſione Chriſti per ipſam Veritatem reddebatur; poſt Aſcenſum Chriſti per Sacramentum Memoriæ celebratur. *Contr. Fauſt. l.* 20. *c.* 21.

† In ſingulari & ſolo Vero Sacrificio pro nobis Chriſti Sanguis effuſus eſt. *Lib.* 1. *contr. Adverſar. Leg. & Proph. cap.* 18.

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it is there expreſsly ſaid, * *We muſt take heed leſt of the Memory, it be made a Sacrifice,* i. e. leſt inſtead of holding the Lord's Supper to be a *Commemoration*, we with the Papiſts declare it to be a Sacrifice. There is nothing of it in our *Liturgy*; nay, in the Prayer after the Communion we pray that God would *mercifully accept this our Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving:* which is ſo expreſſed purpoſely to diſtinguiſh this from the Sacrifice of the Maſs, which the Papiſts hold to be a True Corporal Sacrifice. And further, in that Prayer it is ſaid, *We offer and preſent unto thee our ſelves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto thee,* whereas before in the Popiſh Service-book the Corporal Sacrifice of Chriſt was mentioned. And afterwards in the foreſaid Prayer we ſay, *Though we are unworthy to offer unto thee any Sacrifice,* yet we beſeech thee *to accept this our bounden Duty and Service.* Which without doubt is thus expreſſed to exclude all Thoughts of the *Offering* or *Sacrifice* in the Sacrament, which is in uſe in the Church of *Rome.* If Sacrificing belonged to a Miniſter of the Chriſtian Church, we ſhould certainly meet with it in the Form of *Ordaining of Prieſts,* but there is not the leaſt Intimation of it there; for beſides the Power of the Keys conferred by the Biſhop, he ſaith, *Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to miniſter the Sacraments*; whereas in the Maſs-book it was ſaid, *Take thou Authority to offer Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead.* We ſee then that the Sacrificing Prieſt is diſallowed of by our Church, and there is no ſuch Thing belonging to his Office as a material *Sacrificing.* In our *Church-Catechiſm* we are taught that *the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained for the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the*

* Homily of the worthy receiving and reverend eſteeming of the Sacrament, *part* 1.

Death

Death of Chriſt, and of the Benefits we receive thereby; and conſequently it is not itſelf a Sacrifice.

And this hath been the Doctrine of the Learned and Pious Fathers of our Church, who have trod in the Steps of that Eminent Writer Biſhop *Jewel*, who declares that * *Chriſt only upon his Croſs is our Whole and Only Sacrifice for Sin, and beſides him we have no other.* And again, ſpeaking of the Sacrifice of Chriſt on the Croſs, he ſaith, † *We verily, becauſe we know this to be the Only Sacrifice, are well content with it alone, and look for no other: and for as much as it was to be offered but Once, we command it not to be renewed again: and becauſe it was Full and Perfect in all Points and Parts, we do not ordain in place thereof any continual Succeſſion of Offerings.* And this Learned Prelate in his Reply to Mr. *Harding*, Article 17. largely proves that the Sacrament *is not a Real Sacrifice.* This was the Senſe of our Divines at and a great while after the *Reformation*, yea, (as a § Learned Writer amongſt us acknowledges) *thoſe of the Reformed Religion have either wholly abſtained from the Names of Sacrifice and Oblation, or mentioned them with Caution and Reſerve in explaining the Sacrament.* Thus it was 'till a Generation of Churchmen ſtepped up, who pretend to be more zealous for our Church than the reſt of their Brethren, and yet have wretchedly betrayed it in aſſerting a Doctrine which is expreſsly condemned by our Church.

But *Scripture* is made uſe of by them to juſtify and maintain this Doctrine. They are ſo daring as to apply thoſe Words in *Pſal.* cx. 4. *Heb.* v. 6. *Thou art a Prieſt for ever after the Order of Melchiſedeck*, which refers to *Gen.* xiv. 18. where becauſe we read that *Melchiſedeck* preſented the Patriarch *Abraham* with Bread and Wine, they infer thence

* Defence of the Apology of the Church of England, *part* 1.
† Part 2. § D. Potter, of Church-Government, *chap.* 5. *p.* 274.

that

that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament are a Sacrifice offered to God. Their Heads are strangely turned who can admit of such a wild Inference as this: for though we should grant that *Melchisedeck* was a Type and Representative of Christ our High Priest, and that his Present of Bread and Wine was a Figure of the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, (which is what the Fathers generally say;) yet there is no Ground to conclude thence that the Ministers of the Gospel are of *Melchisedeck*'s Order, and that they imitate him in offering Bread and Wine in the Eucharist, and are bound to imitate him in so doing. For it is not said in the History that *Melchisedeck offered* bread and Wine, but only that *he brought forth Bread and Wine*; neither is it said, that he offered them *to God*, but the plain Relation is that when *Abraham* and his Soldiers returned from the Slaughter of the Kings, *Melchisedeck* came and met them, and gave them Bread and Wine to refresh them after their great Fatigues and Dangers. But the Romanists palpably pervert this Narration, and tell us that *Melchisedeck* came and made an *Offering* or *Sacrifice* of Bread and Wine to *God*. This is disowned by * *Tertullian*, † *Ambrose*, § *Epiphanius*, || *Damascen.* And those Antient Fathers *Justin Martyr* and *Origen* take no notice of *Melchisedeck*'s Oblation of Bread and Wine as a Type of Christ's Oblation.

An other Place alledged by our late Writers is *Mal.* i. 11. where it is foretold that in the Times of the Gospel there shall *be offered to God's Name a pure Offering*, that is, say they, the Sacrifice of the Mass. It is true some of the Fathers understand this Text concerning the Lord's Supper, and they had good Reason for it, because in this Sacrament there is a solemn Offering of Prayer and Praise to

* Cont. Judæos. † De Sacrament. *lib.* 4. *c.* 3.
§ Hæres. 55. || De fid. Orth. *l.* 4. *c.* 14.

God,

God, and here we commemorate our Lord's offering of himſelf on the Croſs. But thoſe muſt be very weak and ſorry Logicians who attempt to gather thence that the Sacrament is a *Proper Sacrifice.* And they have as little Skill in the *Fathers* as they have in *Reaſoning*, for they take no notice how thoſe Antients apply the Text about a *pure Offering* in a General Way, not only to the Euchariſt, but to any other Acts and Duties of Religion. *Tertullian*, in *his Books againſt Marcion*, underſtands it concerning *Prayer* and *Bleſſing*, and *Praiſing of God*, and *giving of Thanks.* In his 3d Book, Chap. 22. his Words are theſe, *This Sacrifice that Malachi ſpeaks of is ſincere Prayer coming from a pure Conſcience.* And at an other time he ſaith, * *The Pure Sacrifice that Malachi ſpeaks of is the Preaching of the Goſpel.* *Euſebius* interprets the Place of the † *Incenſe of Prayers, the Sacrifice of Praiſe and Religious Works.* St. *Jerom* underſtands it of § *the Prayers of holy Men.* So that we ſee theſe Words of the Prophet are not appropriated to the Lord's Supper, but are meant of that in common with all other Duties of the Goſpel, all Spiritual Sacrifices, and conſequently a Sacrifice *properly ſo called* cannot be underſtood here.

Let us now hear what Strong *Arguments* theſe Men bring to eſtabliſh their Opinion. They wiſely tell us that in the Times of the *Patriarchs* and under the *Moſaick* Law, the Worſhip conſiſted chiefly in Material Sacrificing, and therefore under *Chriſtianity* there muſt be the ſame Way of worſhiping God. This is the Sum of what one of them who is well known ſaith in his *Sacrifice the Divine Service*, Chap. 3. Page 96. to 88. and he fancies there is great Strength in it. But I believe the Reader doth

* Cont. Judæos.

† Εὐχῶν θυμίαμα, Αἰνέσεως θυσία, καὶ ἔργων εὐσεβῶν. Demonſtrat. Evang. lib. 1. cap 6, 10. ult.

§ Comment. in 1. Mal. and 8. Zech.

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not expect I ſhould formally attack ſuch weak Pretenſions as theſe; for after this rate of arguing we may revive all the old Obſervances and Rites which were in uſe under the Patriarchal and Jewiſh OEconomies, and bring them into Chriſtianity, that is, as much as to ſay, we may deſtroy the Chriſtian Inſtitution.

An other ſtrong Argument of the ſame Author is this, not unlike the former, *A Sacrifice* (ſaith he) *is neceſſary in every Congregation, becauſe it is this Service that renders God propitious to us*, Chap. 5. which he proves from the Sacrifices of the *Heathens* and *Jews*. This then is his Reaſoning; We muſt have Bodily Sacrifices under the Goſpel, becauſe the *Pagans* and *Jews* had ſo under their Regimen. In anſwer to which it is enough to ſay that he confounds the Diſpenſation of Religion which we are now under with thoſe that were long ago abrogated and annulled. It is in vain to talk with a Man who profeſſes himſelf to be of the Church of *England*, and yet knows not that it is a *Chriſtian* Church, not a *Pagan* or *Jewiſh* one.

Under this Head he vents this excellent Notion, that *Sacrificing is not only the Peculiar, but the Whole Office of the Prieſthood*, Page 114. Accordingly he thinks fit to correct the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man* for making Prayer a Part of Chriſt's Sacerdotal Office. Wherein he widely diſſents from his Brother *Hickes* and the reſt of the Fraternity; therefore I leave him to be rebuked by them.

He undertakes to prove the Oblation of a Sacrifice in the Chriſtian Church, becauſe he finds this very Worſhip performed in Heaven by the Church Triumphant, *Rev.* v. 6. *I beheld, and lo in the midſt of the Throne and of the four Beaſts, and in the midſt of the Elders ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven Horns and ſeven Eyes.* Which Viſion, he ſaith, p. 99, 100, 101. repreſents *a Chriſtian Biſhop*

Biſhop at the Altar offering to God the Chriſtian Oblation; whereas this *Lamb* here ſpoken of is Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who is ſaid to have *ſeven Horns and ſeven Eyes*, to ſignify his Tranſcendent *Power* and his Infinite *Knowledge* or *Wiſdom*: but this Writer moſt blaſphemouſly applies here to the Biſhop or Prieſt what is appropriated to our Saviour our High Prieſt, *viz.* Omnipotency and Omniſciency. The Reader, I believe, hath enough of this; but however he will be ſatisfied that theſe Men make uſe of moſt miſerable Shifts to uphold their Cauſe. It is offered as a Remarkable Obſervation by one of them that the Rubrick in our Liturgy bids the Prieſt *ſtand at the Altar* when he is to Conſecrate the Bread and Wine, becauſe that was the Poſture of *Sacrificers*, and conſequently proper when the Great Sacrifice of the Euchariſt is offered by the Prieſt. But there is no ſuch Thing as this Obſervator dreams of; for firſt there is no mention of an *Altar* in the Rubrick or any where elſe in the Order for the Communion. Again, the Miniſter is bid to *ſtand before the Table*, and the Reaſon of it is given, that *he may ſo order the Bread and Wine, that he may with more Readineſs and Decency break the Bread before the People*, &c. Where is there any Ground then for imagining ſuch a Thing as *Sacrificing?* And again, is not *Standing* the Poſture of Praying, as well as of Sacrificing, as we learn from the Scriptures? Why then is it appropriated to this latter? But ſay what we will, this Doctrine of Sacrificing at the Altar in our Churches muſt be kept up. It is now become a Darling Notion, and we ſee it every day more and more prevailing.

My Third Propoſition is, that *there are no Altars under the Goſpel.* Though I have little to do now, becauſe having largely proved that there is *no Proper Prieſt* nor *Sacrifice*, it will thence naturally follow that there can be no *Altar*, becauſe this hath

hath a direct Reference to *Priesthood* and *Sacrifice*, yet I will adjoin a few Words, and what I have to say shall be reduced to these ensuing Heads.

I. Though the Word *Altar* be mentioned in the New Testament with relation to Christ, yet it no ways favours the Use of Material Altars, such as some of our Churchmen contend for. All the Writers of the Church of *Rome*, and some of our own make use of the Apostle's Words in *Heb.* xiii. 10. *We have an Altar*, and they understand it of the Material Altar on which the Sacrament is celebrated. But any Man who is not governed by gross Prejudice must needs see that the *Altar* here is put for the *Sacrifice* or *Oblation* on the Altar, as is plain from the next Words, *whereof they have no Right to eat who serve the Tabernacle*, that is, none are capable of receiving Benefit by Christ the Great and Only Sacrifice, who adhere to the Ceremonial Law, and observe the Mosaick Rites; for this is in a manner to deny Christ who came to abolish the *Jewish* Worship, and to offer himself a Sacrifice on the Cross. We Christians, saith the Apostle, are so happy as to *have this Sacrifice* on that Altar, and none can expect to partake of the Fruits of it (which answers to the *Eating of the Sacrifice* under the Law) but those that renounce the *Jewish* Observances, and wholly rely on Christ for Justification and Salvation. And the manner of the Expression here used puts it out of doubt that *Altar* is as much as *Sacrifice*; for the *Jewish* Worshippers did not eat of the Altar, but of the Sacrifice which was offered on the Altar; for it is well known that some part of the Sacrifice was usually reserved to be fed upon by the Offerers. Therefore *to partake of the Altar*, 1 Cor. ix. 13. refers to those who under the Law had their Share of the Meat offered on the Altar.

That other Text is used by some of the Church of *Rome*, and even by those of our own, and by Mr.

Mr. *Mede* more particularly, *Mat.* v. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar and there remember that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* But that Learned Man was very much beſide the Senſe of the Place; for though what he ſaith in general is true, that it is an *Evangelical Precept*, yet herein he is miſtaken that it is Literally and Properly expreſſed, and that thence we may gather that there is an Altar in the Goſpel Service, and that we are to bring a Sacrifice to it. No ſuch Thing is implied: for our Saviour's Stile is according to the State of Religion and Worſhip which was at that time amongſt the *Jews*, who had material Altars on which they ſacrificed. In this Text, as in ſeveral others in the Old and New Teſtament, a Spiritual Duty of the Chriſtian Religion is expreſſed by Terms uſed in the Judaical Service and Worſhip. And that Learned Writer is miſtaken again when he ſaith this Precept is a particular Inſtance of that *Righteouſneſs* before ſpoken of Verſe 20. *Except your Righteouſneſs exceed the Righteouſneſs*, &c. It hath no relation to it at all: for our Saviour in Verſe 21. enters upon New Matter, namely to ſhew how the *Jewiſh* Teachers in former Times had corrupted the true Senſe and Meaning of the Law, and he proves this from ſeveral Inſtances, the firſt whereof is this (which concerns our preſent Buſineſs); It was ſaid by them of old, *Thou ſhalt not kill; but I ſay unto you that whoſoever is angry with his Brother without a Cauſe, — and whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Brother, Raka*, &c. *ſhall be in danger* — As much as to ſay, If thou haſt at any time broken out into Anger and Paſſion againſt thy Neighbour, and haſt uſed evil Language, do not think that any Part of Worſhip which thou performeſt to God will be acceptable to him, 'till thou haſt repented of this double Sin of Anger and Evil-

Evil-speaking, and 'till thou hast testified thy Repentance by owning thy Fault to thy Neighbour, and by seeking to be reconciled to him, and by making Satisfaction to him for thy Offence. This is the plain and obvious Meaning of our Saviour's Words, and there is nothing contained in them that favours the Opinion of Altars and Sacrifices under the Gospel.

II. Though the Word *Altar* be used by some of the *Antients*, yet it is spoken Improperly, with allusion only to the Levitical Service which obtained heretofore. There is a plain Demonstration of this; for we are ascertained that the Antient Christians had no Altars in their Churches, or any where else, and that they allowed not of any Altars: wherefore if at any time they mention Altars as belonging to Divine Worship, they mean it in an improper Sense. Thus *Clement of Alexandria* saith * *the Soul of the Righteous is a holy Altar*, looking upon That only as the Acceptable Altar in the Christian Dispensation. From *Origen* we learn that the Christians † avoided the Erecting of Altars: and whereas *Celsus* objects to the Christians that they have no Altars, and therefore are defective in that Part of Worship, *Origen* answers that § the Hearts and Consciences of the Pious are instead of Altars, from whence they send up pure Prayers and Supplications. So from *Minutius Felix* we learn that when the Pagans upbraided the Christians with this, that they had no Altars, the Christians confessed the Truth of it, and gloried that their Religion suffered them not to erect Altars. *Arnobius* testifies the same in his Books *against the Gentiles*, who found fault with the Christians because they had no Altars: but this Writer tells them plainly that it is unlawful among Christians to have any such Worship. *Lactantius* tells them the same in his Book concerning *False Religion*. The par-

* Strom. *lib.* 7. † Cont. Cels. *lib.* 8. § Ibid.

ticular Quotations out of theſe Authors are ſo well known to the Learned that I need not ſet them down. The plain Truth is that the Primitive Chriſtians had no other than Moveable Tables of Wood for the Uſe of the Holy Communion. This laſted three hundred Years, that is, 'till *Conſtantine the Great's* Time, when there were erected Tables of Stone in ſeveral Churches, but not in all. Yea, the plain Wooden Tables were in uſe in Churches in *Athanaſius's* Time (as appears from his *Second Apology*, and from his *Encycl. Epiſtle* to the Biſhops) and a good while afterwards in ſome Churches. And from many other Teſtimonies it is evident that there was no Altar uſed or allowed of in the Service of the Church in the Primitive Times; and therefore it neceſſarily follows thence that when any of the Antient Writers make mention of Altars, they ſpeak not of Altars properly ſo called.

III. Our own Church allows not of *Altars*, nor ſo much as the Name. The Rubrick in our Liturgy never uſes this Word, but always calls the Place on which the Bread and Wine at the Lord's Supper are depoſited *the Lord's Table:* and even in the *Office* or *Order for the Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper* it hath that Name, and ſometimes it is called *the Holy Table*, and barely *the Table.* It is well known that the Altars which were in our Churches were changed into Tables in King *Edward* the VIth's Reign, as being agreeable to the Primitive Uſe. This Change was firſt made in the fourth Year of that Pious Prince by Biſhop *Ridley*, then Biſhop of *London*, and it prevailed afterwards all over *England.* Our *Canons* order *that a convenient and decent Table be provided in every Church.* And the *Rubrick* in our Liturgy orders that *the Table at the Communion time ſhall ſtand where Morning and Evening Prayer is appointed to be ſaid.* Query whether we do not act contrary to this Rubrick of our Church by removing the Table into the Chancel at the Time of Communion, and placing

placing it Altar-wise. It is true, in the seventh Canon made in 1641, *it is declared that this Situation of the Holy Table doth not imply that it is, or ought to be esteemed a True and Proper Altar, whereon Christ is again really sacrificed:* but this was only to palliate the Matter at that time when *Pocklinton* and *Bray*, the Archbishop's Favourites, had been censured by the Parliament for crying up of Altars. Notwithstanding this, there were several Churchmen in those days who maintained the Doctrine of the Altar and Sacrifice, both Names and Things; by which and other Instances we may guess what Church they were posting to. For it is not to be doubted the asserting the Use of Altars and a Sacrifice properly so called tends directly to Popery, and paves the Way to the Church of *Rome*.

A late Writer is not ashamed to own this, for he tells us * that "a Gentleman beyond Sea of high "Station and great Worth hath written to a Di"vine here, that he would come over to the "Church of *England*, if he had not a Scruple "about the Eucharistical Sacrifice, which he found "so well grounded, and so Comfortable that he "knew not how to part with it, and to join with "those who reject it. To which Answer hath "been made, That several Divines of the Church "of *England* assert the Holy Eucharist to be a Sa"crifice: and a more Satisfactory Answer might "have been given, if this Doctrine were universally "received". Many very Considerable Observations and Reflections may be made on this Passage, but the most obvious and important is this, That though the Sacrifice of the Altar be a main Point of Doctrine among the *Romanists*, and that which heretofore hath distinguished them from all others, yet it is embraced by several of our Divines; and that thence there is great Expectation of an Agreement between the Church of *Rome* and

* The Propitiatory Oblation. p. 6, 7.

Us; and that Greater and Ampler Satisfaction may be given to all ſcrupulous Papiſts afterwards, when this Doctrine comes to be univerſally entertained and profeſſed by our Clergy. We ſee then that it is high time for us to fruſtrate the Hopes and Deſigns of thoſe who are contriving to fetch in Popery by this one Contrivance of maintaining *the Reality of a Sacrifice in the Lord's Supper.* To which purpoſe ſome Sheets were lately ſent by an unknown Hand to the then Vice-chancellor of the Univerſity of *Cambridge, and ſubmitted to the Cenſure and Judgement of this Univerſity.* Therein the Author contends for the reſtoring of the *Latin Maſs* in all Churches; he inſiſts that *it is Sacriledge to aboliſh that Service*; he holds that *it is the Duty of every Perſon to hear Maſs upon Sundays*, and that *the celebrating the Maſs is a diſtinguiſhing Mark of the Chriſtian Prieſthood.* He ridicules the Liturgy of our Church, and moſt reproachfully abuſes the ſeveral Parts of it, and calls it *the Modern Cant.* So bold and daring are theſe Men grown within a few Years! ſo impudent are they as to offer ſuch Papers as theſe to that Famous Univerſity, where there are ſo many that deteſt and abhor ſuch Notions, and are ready and able with their Pens to confute them!

But I mention this to open the Eyes of ſome Men among us, and to give them a Sight of the preſent Tendency of this Opinion, and the dangerous Conſequences of it: For in this Point theſe Men are as True Papiſts as any at *Rome.* They can freely go to Maſs in any Popiſh Church, for they hold the *ſame Sacrifice*, yea, and *for the Living and the Dead*; for they declare, that after Death the Souls of Men are in ſuch a State that they want ſome Help. The Sacrifice of the Maſs was one of the principal Motives that obliged our *Reformers* to ſeparate from the Church of *Rome:* And for this the Martyrs in Queen *Mary*'s Days laid down their Lives. Yet now ſome who count themſelves

ſelves Good Proteſtants, and of the Church of *England*, profeſs this very Doctrine. And it is obſervable, that theſe late * Writers among us maintain their Point, by alledging the very *ſame Texts*, and uſing the very *ſame Arguments* that the Popiſh Writers, and particularly *Bellarmine* in his *Book of the Maſs*, make uſe of to prove the Euchariſt to be a Proper Sacrifice; and ſometimes they urge the Point with greater Vehemency and Concern. Whatever Subterfuges and Evaſions they may fly to, to diſguiſe themſelves, I doubt not but it will appear at laſt that downright Popery is at the Bottom of all. He that profeſſes himſelf a *Proper Prieſt*, will be a Maſs-Prieſt: The Sacrifice of the Euchariſt, will end at laſt in the Sacrifice of the Maſs.

If, after all, it be ſaid that the Perſons who have lately writ in Defence of a Proper Sacrifice in the Euchariſt, differ from the Papiſts, in as much as they hold that there is no *Tranſubſtantiation* there, but that the Bread and Wine only are ſacrificed; but the Papiſts hold that the Real and Subſtantial Body of Chriſt is ſacrificed in the Euchariſt. The Anſwer to this Suggeſtion is

1. Though our modern Patrons of *Prieſts* and *Sacrifice* do ſometimes diſown the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, yet at other times they ſpeak favourably of it, and at all times they profeſs their Belief of the *Corporal Preſence* of Chriſt in the Sacrament, which, if it be duly examined, is a near Approach to it. It is not to be doubted, that the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation lies lurking under the Notion of a Sacrifice: Which I find to be the Senſe of a very learned Man among us, who expreſsly declares, that *in the Chriſtian Church none can partake of any Sacrifice in a proper and literal Senſe, without allowing Tranſubſtantiation.* Dr. *Potter* of *Church-Government.* chap. 5. p. 268.

* Dr. *Hickes*, Mr. *Leſlie*, Mr. *Scanderet*, &c.

2. Theſe Men ſpeak ambiguouſly as to the Matter of Sacrificing; and though ſometimes they tell us, they mean only the Bread and Wine, yet at other times they expreſsly aſſert, that the Body and Blood of Chriſt are ſacrificed.

3. If we ſhould ſuppoſe that they mean only the Bread and Wine, yet we may truly ſay that the Opinion and Practice of profeſſed Papiſts are more tolerable than that: For the Papiſts holding that the Bread and Wine are really turned into Chriſt's Body and Blood, do conſiſtently enough with that Perſwaſion ſay, that Chriſt's Body is offered up, and that it is a Real and True Propitiatory Sacrifice, becauſe the Oblation of Chriſt's real Body cannot but be ſuch. But on the other Side it is abſurd and ridiculous to ſay, there is a True and Real Propitiatory Sacrifice in the Euchariſt, when only the Bread and Wine are offered up there: For all ſuch Oblations and Sacrifices were aboliſhed and nulled by the one Sacrifice of Chriſt on the Croſs. It is no Wonder then that the *Romaniſts* aſſert *Tranſubſtantiation* in the Sacrament; for by that Means it hath the True Nature of a Sacrifice, if it could be proved that there is any ſuch thing as Tranſubſtantiation there. But theſe other Men who pretend that they aſſert not Tranſubſtantiation, and yet hold a Proper Sacrifice in the Euchariſt, talk moſt unreaſonably and wildly.

4*thly* and laſtly, If we impartially examine the Matter, we ſhall find that though they refuſe (at leaſt for a time) to own the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, yet they do as good as aſſert and maintain it; for they tell us, (as hath been obſerved before) that the Bread and Wine, upon their being Conſecrated, have all the Vertue, Power, and Efficacy that the Natural and True Body and Blood of Chriſt have. What is this but *Tranſubſtantiation? The Sacramental Bread and Wine are Chriſt's Subſtantial, Natural, and True Body and Blood in Power and Effect*, ſaith the Author of the *Unbloody Sacri-*

fice,

fice, p. 177. And again, *To all religious Intents and Purposes, the Bread and Wine are the very Body and Blood of Christ*, p. 212. And this he saith is *by the Operation of the Holy Ghost on the Bread and Wine, at the Prayer of the Priest at Consecration*: And so then the Bread and Wine are made the very Body and Blood of Christ in Effect and Power, and have as much Vertue as if they were the Real and Substantial Body and Blood of Christ. Hence it is evident, that he must needs hold that the Bread and Wine after Consecration, remain no longer Bread and Wine, but are changed into something of an other Nature, which is the same that the Church of *Rome* asserts. But this late Writer and his Friends disguise the Matter, and think to cheat us, by putting Transubstantiation into *New Terms* and *Expressions*. But this Cheat is easily discovered; for the plain Truth is, that the Sacrificing of Christ in the Eucharist, necessarily supposes the Doctrine of Transubstantiation; for how can Christ be sacrificed, if his Body and Blood be not really there? And that is the Consequent of the Elements of Bread and Wine being turned into the Body and Blood of Christ.

I have now something more General to offer to the Reader, and then I have done. We are bid *to abstain from all Appearance of Evil*; and I am sure *Popery* is Evil, and therefore, by Vertue of this Apostolical Rule, we are obliged to abstain from the least *Appearance* of that *Growing Evil*. I would not be mistaken in this Matter; I know there is a great Fault here: Some ignorantly, and others designedly brand with the Name of Popery whatever they dislike in Religion, whatever agrees not with their Fancies. Wherefore, to rectify our Apprehensions in the present Case, we are to know that this is a sure and undeniable Character of *Popish Doctrines and Practices*, namely, that they are such as the *Romanists* assert and defend in Opposition to the *Protestants*; they are those Doctrines or Parts

of Worſhip which our bleſſed *Reformers* laid aſide when they threw off Popery: And among theſe was the *Sacrifice of the Maſs*. Yet now we take it up again, and cultivate it with great Art and Addreſs, and pretend that it is a Neceſſary and Fundamental Doctrine of the Chriſtian Religion. A ſtrange Kind of Proteſtants, who profeſs the Reformed Religion, but hold ſome Parts of Popery *in Commendam!*

Or if it be alledged, that this Tenet, which I have been confuting, is not *direct Popery*; yet it is certain that it is but a ſmall Remove from it. The Gentlemen that vouch it, and with ſuch Eagerneſs promote it of late, are making their Tour to *Rome*, and they are arrived already at the Frontiers and Confines of it. What elſe they ſeem now to ſmother, will blaze out at laſt. Though at preſent they ſtep ſhort in ſome Things, we ſhall ſee them afterwards keeping Pace with the *Romaniſts*: And others perhaps in this degenerate Age will be their Proſelytes.

To prevent this, let us be wary betimes; let us not entertain ſo much as the *Dawnings* of Popery; let us not favour the very *Appertinences* of it, or whatever hath a *Tang* and *Reliſh* of the ſame. It behoves us not to give Ground, not to receed from our former Principles, not to liſten to any Terms of Accommodation. We ſhould inviolably retain our *Proteſtant* Articles, which were conveyed to us by our Excellent *Reformers*. We ſhould be careful not to contribute towards the Return of that Pernicious Sect of *Rome*, by our Complying with *any* of its Doctrines. Let not *Proteſtants* give their helping Hand towards the Introducing of *Popery*. In a Word, let us not only abandon all Papal Superſtition and Corruptions of that Church, but all Doctrines and Practices that *look that Way*.

The

The Time of Reformation.

A Seaſonable

DISCOURSE

OF THE

Effectual MEANS and METHODS of *Reforming* the Lives and Manners of the whole Body of this NATION.



LONDON:

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TO THE

READER.

WHEN you hear the Word *Reformation*, do not expect from me any *Politicks*, any Schemes of Government: I meddle not with State-Affairs, with Revolutions and Changes in Kingdoms. But I keep within the Compaſs of my Sacred Calling and Profeſſion, the Proper Work of which is to endeavour a Change in Mens Lives and Manners, according to the Laws and Rules preſcribed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. I am obliged, by Vertue of my *Character*, to direct Men into the Way of Holineſs, to offer Advice for Regulating their Practice, for making them Better Men and Better Chriſtians. This I mean by *Reformation*, this is that which I here intend and aim at, and make

make the Subject of the enſuing Diſcourſe. I am ſenſible that Vice and Immorality did never reign more openly than in this Age, and in this Nation: So that I fear I attempt in vain to hinder the Growth of theſe Common Evils. But however, I think myſelf obliged in Duty to teſtify my Abhorrence of them, and to endeavour to ſtop the Increaſe of them. And ſeeing my Age and preſent Indiſpoſitions, and frequent Infirmities ſuffer me not to do it from the Pulpit, I think myſelf engaged to diſcharge this Office by the Help of the Preſs, and to *Write* with the ſame Frequency that I have heretofore *Preached*.

The Deſign of the following Diſcourſe hath led me to be very free with my *Brethren of the Clergy*: But what is thus freely ſpoken is no Reflection (nor can it by any intelligent Perſon be thought to be ſuch) on any of the Learned, Prudent, and Pious Clergymen of our Church, to whoſe Names I riſe up with the greateſt Reſpect and Reverence, and who are deſervedly honoured, and *eſteemed very highly for their Work's ſake*; that is, for the Holy Office which they bear, and which they ſo faithfully and conſcientiouſly diſcharge. May the Number of theſe Perſons be increaſed every Day in our Church. But as for the degenerate

Sort

Sort of Churchmen, no Man can be too free in Cenſuring and Reproving them, becauſe they behave themſelves ſo unſuitably to their Character. But let me beg of theſe Perſons, that they would receive theſe my preſent Admonitions with the ſame Simplicity, Candour, and Sincerity, that I offer them to them; eſpecially when I tell them, that it is out of a deep Senſe and Conſciouſneſs of my own Failings and Neglects in this Kind (which the merciful God forgive for the Merits of *Jeſus*) that I call upon others to *fulfil their Miniſtry* with all Care and Diligence, to be Faithfull in their Sacred Office, to do Things becoming their Place and Profeſſion, to make it their Buſineſs to advance the Honour of their Great Maſter, to promote the Salvation of Mens Souls by their Doctrine and Example, and to accompliſh a General Reformation among the Inhabitants of this Land.

One thing which I have more eſpecially recommended to my Brethren is, *Warmth and Vigour in the Pulpit*. This may be thought by ſome to be an Affectation of *Popularity*, and others will cenſure it as *Canting*: But this proceeds from an undue Apprehenſion of a *Preacher*'s Duty, which is to work upon the tender Paſſions of his People, and to kindle Heavenly Affections in his Auditors. They miſtake

take *Catechizing* for *Preaching* who think otherwiſe. To this Purpoſe, I cannot but take notice of ſome Remarkable Paſſages from the Pen of a worthy Writer, a great Admirer of the Church of *England*, and of her Clergy, who dwells much upon this *Warmth*, and commends it to them from the Practice of one of our *Eminent Churchmen*, whoſe Life he hath written. *What he delivered*, ſaith he *, *from the Pulpit never wanted a becoming Fervour, and he enlivened his Diſcourſes with proper and decent Geſtures, and his Voice was always exerted with ſome Vehemency, whereby he kept the Audience awake, and raiſed their Attention to what he delivered, and perſuaded the People that he was in earneſt, and was affected Himſelf with what he recommended to them.* Again, *He had*, ſaith he, *a Way of gaining People's Hearts, and touching their Conſciences.* And this Writer wiſhes that our Clergy would inure themſelves to *decent Geſtures, and graceful Deportment, the Influence whereof all Hearers can eaſier feel than expreſs.*

I find this further urged by this Gentleman, who is Eminent for his Zeal for our Church;

* Mr. *Nelſon*, in his Life of Biſhop *Bull.*

he

he tells us that the Doctrines of Chriſtianity *muſt be delivered and addreſſed to the People in ſo affecting and moving a Manner, that their Paſſions may be winged to a vigorous Proſecution of what is taught.* And in the ſame Place he hath theſe remarkable Words, *What a dreadful Account will thoſe Governours in the Church have to give at the Day of Judgement, who Ordain ſuch as by their Adminiſtrations quench the Devotion of the People, and provoke our Adverſaries to reproach us?* If a Perſon who is of the *Laity* thinks it no Preſumption to ſpeak thus freely of our Churchmen, I hope I may as a Faithful Brother be permitted to uſe the like Liberty and Impartiality.

I have expreſſed this Liberty in the following Papers on an other Account, that is, in taking notice of ſome of our Clergy's Abandoning ſome *Articles* which I apprehend are great Helps towards a Holy Life, and a truly Chriſtian Reformation: And the contrary Doctrines promote Unchriſtian Practices, and ſuch as are not conformable to the Goſpel. I have often mentioned this to our Churchmen, and now again I briefly urge it, though I have almoſt exhauſted the Theme. But I have here, and at other Times demonſtrated the *Neceſſity* of this

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my Conduct; and I hope at laſt I ſhall make ſome Impreſſion on thoſe who are heartily deſirous to ſee the Orthodox Doctrines and Articles of our Church reſtored, and the True Faith of Chriſt maintained and upheld. And my Hopes are, that if I can do but little or nothing towards reforming the *Preſent Age*, I may by this Attempt do ſomething towards Amending the *Next*.

A BRIEF DISCOURSE OF *REFORMATION*,

Grounded on HEB. ix. 10.

--Until the Time of Reformation.

THE Apoſtle in this and ſome of the former Chapters compares the *Moſaical Service* and *Worſhip* with that of the Goſpel, and ſhews how exceedingly the former is ſurpaſſed by this latter: For here, he ſaith, are, *a better Hope*, Chap. vii. Ver. 10. *a better Covenant* or *Teſtament*, Ver. 22. *better Promiſes*, Chap. viii. Ver. 6. *a more excellent Miniſtry*, in the ſame Verſe. Yea, we need go no further back than the Words immediately preceeding the Text; for there we are told how

mean a Diſpenſation the *Jewiſh* one was, in Reſpect of that of the *Chriſtians:* The Worſhip of the *Jews* conſiſted in *Offering Gifts and Sacrifices, that could not make him that did the Service perfect, as appertaining to the Conſcience*; that is, Mens Hearts and Lives were not throughly purged from their Sins, nor freed from Guilt by Vertue of theſe External Rites. The Apoſtle adds, that this *Jewiſh* Service *ſtood only in Meats and Drinks, and diverſe Waſhings, and carnal Ordinances*, which were a *Figure for the Time then preſent*; that is, though theſe Moſaick Rites and Ceremonies were but Figurative and Typical, yet they were ſuitable enough to that Diſpenſation which then prevailed, and which was deſigned to prepare that People for the Times of the Goſpel. Theſe *Carnal Ordinances* were to be an Introduction to the *Spiritual* Ones, which were to take Place *in the Time of Reformation*, or the Time of *Correction* and *ſetting Things Right*, as the * Word in the Original denotes.

This Bleſſed Time of the Goſpel hath ſeveral other Denominations; it is expreſſed by *Repairing* and *Reſtoring*, Iſa. lviii. 12. and by the ſame Evangelical Prophet it is called *the acceptable Year of the Lord*, Iſa. lxi. 2. or, according to the *Hebrew*, the *Year of Benevolence*, or, *the Good-will of the Lord*, becauſe the Time of the Goſpel is the ſpecial Seaſon of God's diſplaying his Grace and Favour in an extraordinary Manner. This State of Chriſtianity is ſtiled by our Saviour † the *Regeneration*, Matt. xix. 28. becauſe now the World is called to an Acknowledgement of the Chriſtian Faith, to Repentance and a New Life, which are *Regeneration*. The Titles given to it by our Apoſtle are the *Accepted Time*, and *the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. vi. 2. referring to *Iſa.* xlix. 8. Some of the

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* Διόρθωσις. † Παλιγγενεσία.

Antient

Antient Writers of the Chriſtian Church call it the * *New and* † *Evangelical Way of Living and Converſing*, becauſe it differs ſo much from the old one under the Law, and is, as it were, the Amending and Perfecting of the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy. Accordingly, what the Apoſtle calls here the *Time of Reformation*, is by one of the Primitive Writers ſtiled || the *Time of Perfection*, becauſe now the Service and Worſhip of God is brought to its utmoſt Perfection.

What hath been already ſaid gives me occaſion to *obſerve in General*, that *there have been different Diſpenſations of Religion in the World*, and the Foremoſt of them made Way for the more Perfect, which were to come afterwards. This is a very weighty Truth, and worthy of our Conſideration, becauſe hereby we ſhall be reminded and ſtirred up to take notice of the various Methods and Tranſactions of Divine Providence, and to admire the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in them all. Since Man's Defection from the State of Primitive Innocence, there hath always been this *Gradation*, ſtill rolling on 'till the State of Innocence doth, as it were, return again. This Covenant of Grace by the Meſſias, *The Seed of the Woman*, was declared ſoon after the Apoſtaſy of our Firſt Parents, *Gen.* iii. 15. but the farther Revelation of it was gradual, and by little and little. In the *Antediluvian* State, which laſted above ſixteen Centuries, there were ſome Glimmerings and faint Repreſentations of this Bleſſed Truth; but generally the Law of Nature prevailed, with ſome Mixtures of Divine Revelation. In the Time of the Patriarchal Oeconomy *after the Flood*, which took up above one thouſand Years, this happy Diſcovery and the Effects of it,

* Ἡ καινὴ πολιτεία. Chryſoſt. in *Pſal.* cxii. 9.
† Εὐαγγελικὴ πολιτεία. Baſil. M. Homil. 13.
|| Ὁ τῆς τελειότητος καιρός. Theodoret in loc.

were made more evident and conſpicuous, by particular and occaſional Revelations and Promiſes, and the Confirmation of them from Heaven. The *Moſaick* or *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation (which was much longer than the preceeding ones) though it abounded with Types and dark Repreſentations, with Ritual and Ceremonial Obſervances, yet it far exceeded the two former, by reaſon of the Divine Written Laws, and the Rules for the ſolemn Worſhip of God which were then delivered. And even under this Diſpenſation there were different *Degrees*, according to the Proceſs of Times. Laſtly, the *Chriſtian* and *Evangelical State* arrived, which commenced upon the Actual Appearing of Chriſt in the World, and is called here *the Time of Reformation* or *Correction*, becauſe This corrects and reforms all the Defects in the foregoing States of Religion.

But then we are to know that this Goſpel OEconomy was not to arrive to its utmoſt Height and Perfection at firſt. Though it be the Laſt Adminiſtration of Religion, yet it is to be Compleated by certain Steps and Degrees, in the diſtinct Periods and Ages that are to come. The *Firſt* and *Tender Years* of Chriſtianity were in the Time when our Saviour and his Apoſtles were on the Earth, and the Times that immediately ſucceeded. The *Youthful* or *Stronger Age* of Chriſtianity began, and hath laſted ever ſince the remarkable abandoning of Judaiſm, and the Ceſſation of Extraordinary Gifts in the Church, and of Signs and Miracles; for theſe were Arguments of the Weak and Imperfect State of the Chriſtian Church. The *Manhood* or *Full Age* of Chriſtianity is to come next, which will be bleſſed with the Converſion of all *Jews* and *Gentiles*, with the Deſtruction of the Myſtical *Babylon*, with the Arrival of Univerſal Righteouſneſs, and an uninterrupted Peace and Proſperity. I know this Scheme of the Chriſtian State is not conformable to ſome Mens Sentiments, but I am not now to de-

demonſtrate the Truth of it, I having already done it from abundant Topicks, and eſpecially from Scripture in a * Diſcourſe on this Subject. And I doubt not but *the Time of Reformation* ſpoken of by our Apoſtle doth in its *Ultimate Extent* refer to this Bleſſed Adminiſtration: and it is our proper Duty and Concern to help forward this Glorious Revolution, and to haſten it as much as in us lies; which we cannot more effectually do than by the *Reformation* which it is in our Power at this day to undertake and accompliſh by the Divine Bleſſing.

Obſerve here to this purpoſe that a *Reformation*, that is, a Meliorating the State of Religion, hath been always enterpriſed by Good and Holy Men in the ſeveral Ages of the World. We read that in the Days of *Seth* and *Enoſh*, *Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*, Gen. iv. 26. the Meaning of which is that thoſe Religious Patriarchs were the Perſons who revived and re-eſtabliſhed the Service of the True God, which was in a great meaſure decayed by the Degeneracy of thoſe Times, and particularly by the Example of thoſe of the Line of *Cain*, and that they rectified the Manners of that Age. *Noah* was a Preacher of Righteouſneſs to the Old World, and the Founder and Eſtabliſher of it in the New one. *Abraham* was raiſed up by God to reſtore and maintain the True Religion, when it began to be corrupted with Idolatry. *Moſes* redeemed the People of *Iſrael* from *Egypt* and from Idolatry at once, and delivered to them the Divine Law on Mount *Sinai*, which was for the regulating of their Lives. *Joſhua* erected the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, and bound the People by ſolemn Engagements to ſerve God. The Reformation under the *Jewiſh* State was advanced by *Extraordinary Prophets* (diſtinct from Levites and Prieſts), who were immediately inſpired, and

* A Survey of the different Diſpenſations of Religion, *vol.* 2. *c.* 19.

ſent on purpoſe to remonſtrate againſt the Wickedneſs of the Kings and People, and to preſs with all Zeal an Amendment.

I muſt not forget here *Samuel*, a Prieſt, a Prophet, a Judge, who was a Great Reformer both of Church and State, there being great need at that Time of his Authority in both. *David* ſettled the Ark in *Jeruſalem*, and fixed the Orders concerning the Solemn Worſhip of God, even in the Temple, which was afterwards erected by his Son. This Excellent Prince being Pious and Devout himſelf, endeavoured to make others ſo, and to inſpire the whole *Jewiſh* Nation with a Senſe of Goodneſs and Piety, that ſo their future Behaviour might be more acceptable to God, and derive upon them his Bleſſing.

Some of the ſucceeding Kings inherited his Spirit, as *Aſa* and *Jehoſaphat*, who demoliſhed the Groves and Images, and high Places; and *Hezekiah*, who pulled down other Monuments of Idolatry, and renewed the Celebration of the Paſſover. King *Joſiah* was the Greateſt Reformer of all; for he repaired the Temple, reſtored the Law, ſolemnized the Paſſover, and it appeared through the whole Courſe of his Reign that he made it his Buſineſs to redreſs the Diſorders of his Time, and to make his People every way Better.

At the *Jews Return* from their *Captivity* we have famous Inſtances of Reformation in Worſhip and Manners under the Conduct of *Zorobabel* and *Joſhua*, who laid the Foundation of the Second Temple, and afterwards finiſhed that Sacred Structure. *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* took care of the Worſhip of God, and appointed the Book of the Law not only to be read, but to be expounded to the People. They were the Authors of the Strict Obſervation of the Sabbath-day, and of putting away ſtrange Wives, and of laying aſide the Practice of Unlawful Uſury; and they made the People enter into an

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Aſſociation and Covenant to be very Exact in their Religion and Manners. Some of the *Maccabees* were Zealous Aſſerters and Patrons of their Religion, and frighted away Vice and Profaneneſs by their Exemplary Virtue and Piety.

To paſs to the *Goſpel Times*; theſe were more ſignally *Times of Reformation*. To uſher which in, *John the Baptiſt* the Forerunner of Chriſt undertook the Reſtauration of Primitive Faith and Manners, according to Chriſt's Character of him, that he *ſhould reſtore all Things*, Mat. xvii. 11. and according to the Angel's Prediction concerning him, that *he ſhould turn many unto the Lord*, that he *ſhould turn the Hearts of the Fathers unto the Children, and the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt*, Luke i. 16, 17. But our Lord JESUS CHRIST himſelf was the *Greateſt Corrector* and *Reformer*, as we ſee evidently in his chaſtiſing and rebuking the Phariſees and Sadducees, who had perverted and depraved the Law: and indeed the *Whole Inſtitution* which he introduced was but One *Great Reformation*, the Greateſt and moſt Remarkable that ever was.

And when, in the Beginning of this Bleſſed State and the five Centuries following, there crept into the Church Heretical Opinions, Abuſes and Corruptions, and the Lewdeſt Practices; and when in the ſixth Century Ignorance, Credulity, Feigned Miracles and Superſtitious Ceremonies prevailed, which made way for the ſeventh Century, in which Pope *Boniface* III. took upon him the Title of *Univerſal Biſhop*, and thereby Eccleſiaſtical Tyranny, Groſs Errors, Wickedneſs and Debauchery filled up the next eight Centuries; when it was Thus, and the Doctrines, Worſhip and Morals of Chriſtians were corrupted, yet it is obſervable that in all theſe Ages there aroſe ſome Men of Learning and Piety, who endeavoured to reſtore Truth and Orthodox

Faith, and to beat down Immorality and Profaneneſs.

And the ſixteenth Age was famous for the *Reformation* from *Popery*, which was begun in *Saxony*, in the Year 1517, by *Martin Luther*, aſſiſted by the Elector of *Saxony*, the Marqueſs of *Brandenbourg*, and other *German* Princes, and ſoon ſpread itſelf into *Switzerland*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, *France*, *the Low Countries*, *England*, and *Scotland*, and had a ſecret Influence on ſeveral other Territories. And beſides our firſt caſting off of Popery here in *England*, there was afterwards in King *Edward* the VIth and Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reigns a *Farther Reformation* in Doctrine and Manners. And ever ſince that Time, the Zeal of True and Hearty Lovers of Religion hath puſhed them on not only to oppoſe the *Innovations* of the Church of *Rome*, but to correct the *Evil Lives* of Profeſſed *Proteſtants*.

It is this Latter, that I am concerned for at preſent, and accordingly I ſhall make it my Buſineſs to offer ſome *Proper Directions* for the *Reforming of Mens Lives and Manners* in this Preſent Age, and particularly of thoſe in this Kingdom. Which I take to be a very Seaſonable Work.

In order then to this *National* and *Publick Reformation*, Firſt, There ought to be Care taken for the inſtilling of Right Principles of Religion into Mens Minds. Secondly, Theſe Principles and Doctrines muſt be delivered in that way which is likely to prove moſt Prevalent and Succeſsful. Thirdly, The Clergy are concerned to conform their Lives to the Holy Rules which they deliver to the People. Fourthly, Scandalous Offenders are to be caſt out of the Communion of the Church. Fifthly, A Perfect Agreement in Publick Worſhip would be very uſeful. Sixthly, There muſt be a Concurrence of the Civil Powers.

I. Care muſt be taken that we be ſet right in our *Principles*. This is the Firſt Thing I propound,

pound, and, I conceive, with good Reaſon; for there can be no Superſtructure of a Holy Life and Practice without this Foundation to ſupport and maintain it. Wherefore I begin here, and call upon all the Miniſters of the Word, all the Publick Inſtructors of the People, like *Wiſe Builders* to take care of the *Ground-work*, to furniſh Mens Minds with Sound Notions and Apprehenſions of Divine Matters, and to root out thoſe Unſound and Falſe Conceptions which have had too great a Power and Sway over them. Let us continually pray and endeavour that *the Weapons of our Warfare may be Mighty through God to the pulling down of Strong Holds, and caſting down* * *Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every* † *Thought to the Obedience of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. x. 5. There is the *Strong Hold* of *Atheiſm*, though there are few that dare openly and avowedly defend it. There is the Strong Hold of *Deiſm*, and this is kept by very Numerous Troops, who deride the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and ridicule the Sacred Inſtitutions of Chriſt's Church, and the very Being and Nature of a Chriſtian Church. There is the Strong Hold of *Scepticiſm*, maintained by Squadrons of Doubting People, who queſtion the Truth and Reality of all Things, and ſay they are Sure of no Thing. There is the Strong Hold of *Enthuſiaſm*, which undermines Religion by Pretences of Inſpiration and Revelation. Some furious Sallies were lately made from this Fortreſs, but the Aſſailants were repulſed with great Loſs and Shame. There is the Strong Hold of *Popery*, which hath held out a long time with great Obſtinacy, notwithſtanding the many wide Breaches which have been made in its Walls. There is the Fortreſs of *Arianiſm* and

* Λογισμὸς, corrupt Reaſonings.

† Νόημα, Conceit or Invention.

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Socinianiſm, into which many Succours have been thrown of late, and they play their Engines with freſh Vigour. There is the Fortification of *Remonſtrants* and *Arminians*, held by a ſtrong Garriſon of the Principal Officers and Soldiers: and here is a Magazine and Store-houſe with Proviſion for ſome of the other Strong Places.

Now, all theſe *Strong Holds* muſt be diſmantled, demoliſhed, deſtroyed, or elſe the *Wickedneſs* of Mens *Lives* will increaſe upon us daily; for All Theſe, though in a different Way and Degree, promote the Corrupt Manners of the Men of this Age. Wherefore, in oppoſition to the forementioned erected *Fortreſſes*, there muſt be ſet up and continually maintained Impregnable Caſtles for the Defence of Religion and the Practice of Godlineſs by a firm and ſteady *Belief of the Exiſtence* of an Infinite and Eternal Spirit who gave Being to all Things, and upholds them in it, and governs the World with Exact Wiſdom, Juſtice and Mercy: by a ſteady Perſuaſion of the *Truth* and *Certainty of Divine Revelation:* by a Baniſhing of all *Sceptical* Doubts about the Reality of Things: by a rejecting all *Enthuſiaſtick* Dreams and Deluſions: by renouncing theſe pernicious Articles which the *Church* of *Rome* impoſes on its Votaries: by maintaining the *Divinity* and *Satisfaction* of Chriſt, againſt the Diſciples of *Arius* and *Socinus:* by aſſerting thoſe Doctrines which vindicate the *Sovereignty* of *God* and the *Weakneſs* of *Man*, againſt the Friends of *Pelagius* and the Remonſtrants. The Three laſt of theſe I ſhall more particularly enlarge upon and ſhew how they directly tend to the Corruption of Manners, and therefore ought not to be inſtilled into Mens Minds, but the Contrary to them are to be urged and inculcated if we deſire their Reformation.

Firſt, it is an undeniable Truth that moſt of the *Popiſh* Tenets lead directly to the Corruption of Mens

Mens Morals. The Doctrines of *Implicit Faith* and *Blindfold Obedience* thruſt them upon any Action, though never ſo Flagitious and Enormous, that is enjoined them by their Superiours. *Confeſſion to a Prieſt* in his Ear, and his *Abſolution*, wipe away the Fouleſt Sins. The People are taught that they can by *Penances* make Satisfaction for their Sins. *Indulgences*, *Pardons* and *Diſpenſations* may be purchaſed at eaſy Rates; yea, the particular Value of every Sin is ſet down in the Book of Rates. Their Doctrine of *Contrition* (as it is taught by their Confeſſors) is moſt pernicious and fatal to Mens Souls: and ſo is that of the *Tranſlation of Merits* from one to an other; and both are deſtructive to Good Living. The Belief of *Purgatory* encourages them to do Ill Actions in this Life, upon Hopes of being releaſed from their Torments in an other, eſpecially if their Friends can hire good Store of Maſſes to be ſaid for them. By virtue of their Artificial Diſtinction of *Mortal* and *Venial Sins* they make moſt Sins to be of the latter Kind, and ſo are eaſily freed from the Guilt of them. The Looſeneſs of their *Caſuiſtical Divinity* apparently promotes Licentiouſneſs of Life: And who ſees not that their Caſuiſts nicely inſtruct Men to commit Sin? How deſtructive to True Devotion is that Popiſh Doctrine, that as the *Underſtanding* is not neceſſary in Prayer, (whence the conſtant Practice of the Church of *Rome* is to pray in a Language unknown to the People) ſo neither is *Attention* to the Words or the Senſe of their Prayers required of them? Laſtly, the *Ceremonies*, *Pomp* and *Gaity* of the *Roman* Worſhip enervate the Power and Vertue of Religion, damp and choak the very Life of it, and conduce to beget Formality and Hypocriſy, and a mere Shew of Sanctity, and thereby to hinder the real Reformation of Mens Lives. Mere External Rites and Superſtitious Performances are thought to compound

pound for the Want of True Religion, to make amends for the Breach of any Moral Precept. Thus in the *Romiſh* Countries a Man upon Holy-days may more ſafely be found in the *Stewes* than working at his *Lawful Calling*. Thus *Popery* tends to *Immorality*, and though there be a greater outward Shew and Oſtentation of Piety in the Church of *Rome* than any where elſe, yet we can no where find ſuch groſs Inſtances of Irreligious and Unhallowed Practices.

Some of the moſt Diſcerning Heads among them had a Senſe of this, and accordingly we read that about the Time of the *Reformation from Popery* they eagerly called for a Reformation of Manners among thoſe of their own Church, and preſſed it as abſolutely neceſſary. At the *Council of Trent* ſeveral Prelates and other Clergymen inſiſted on this Head, but they were not ſo ſenſible as to conſider that this could not be effected but by the Change of their *Opinions* and *Doctrines*. They were theſe that ſtrongly influenced on their Lives, and depraved their Manners. The Principles of the *Roman* Religion do of themſelves and in their own nature foſter Vice: and though there may be ſome Shadow of Morality in thoſe of that Communion, yet there is generally nothing of the Subſtance and Reality: there may be a *Form of Godlineſs*, but not the *Power* of it. If we would maintain a Sincere, Solid, and Practical Piety, we muſt not entertain any of thoſe foreſaid Doctrines, or any of thoſe Looſe and Impious Principles. But we muſt keep up the True *Proteſtant Doctrines*, and ſhew by this that we highly prize the Great Bleſſing of the Reformation.

In the next Place I am to conſider the *Arian* and *Socinian Doctrines*, and to let you ſee that on theſe Principles a good Life cannot be built. The chief Patrons of theſe Sects deny all *Supernatural Aſſiſtance*, and the *Neceſſity of Special Grace* in order to Con-

Converſion and Regeneration. They have falſe and pernicious Conceptions concerning a *Future State*, aſſerting either the *Annihilation* or the *Inſenſibility* of the Soul after Death. They root up all the Chriſtian Religion by denying the *Divinity of Chriſt*, and, in conſequence of that, the *Satisfaction* which he made for our Sins: for This muſt needs fall to the ground without the owning of the Divinity of Chriſt, becauſe on *this* depends the Efficacy of his Sufferings and all his Undertakings. He could not have merited Salvation for us by his Death, if he had not been *God*, as well as *Man*. It was his Divinity that gave an Infinite Value and Worth to his Sufferings: therefore the Blood which he ſhed upon the Croſs is called *the Blood of God*, Acts xx. 28. It is for this alone that we are accepted of God, and find favour with him, though we be ſinful and polluted Creatures, and have no Worth of our own. Chriſt hath reconciled us to his Father, and made a perfect Atonement for us by his Meritorious Death. This is the only Thing that True Believers can boaſt of, and place their Confidence in. There can be no True Faith, and conſequently no other True Act of Religion, unleſs we own the Sacrifice of Chriſt on the Croſs, and the Satisfaction made to Divine Juſtice by it.

And not only this Meritorious Undertaking of Chriſt, but the *Diſtinct Operations* and *Influences* of the Other *Two Perſons* in the Trinity, which are peculiar to each of them with reſpect to our Salvation, muſt be acknowledged, nay, felt by us. Without this it is impoſſible to have any right Apprehenſions concerning the Nature of our Salvation, and to Act accordingly. And truly, if we were *Chriſtians indeed*, we ſhould not have any Doubts or Heſitations about theſe Articles, but we ſhould moſt readily embrace them; for the Life of Chriſtianity in Mens Hearts would conquer all

all their Scruples. On the contrary, the true Reaſon why theſe Doctrines are ſtruck at in theſe Times is becauſe the Genuine Spirit of Chriſtianity is ſo much decayed, and there is little feeling of the Vertue of the Goſpel, which is neceſſary to the Practice of it. This, I conceive, proves what I deſigned to acquaint you with, That the *Socinian Errours* are deſtructive of a Holy and Chriſtian Life.

And the ſame may juſtly be ſaid of the Doctrines of the *Remonſtrants* and Rigid *Arminians*, by reaſon of the near Affinity between theſe and the other Perſons before mentioned: for though all *Arminians* are not *Socinians*, yet all *Socinians* are *Arminians*. I ſpeak at this Time of thoſe Doctrines only wherein the *Socinians* and the Generality of *Arminians* are agreed, namely their denying *Original Sin*, their extolling and over-valuing the *Strength of Nature*, their under-valuing and depreciating the *Grace of God*, and thoſe other Doctrines which have relation to theſe. Such Principles as theſe are very unſerviceable towards the Amending Mens Lives, and making them Better, yea, they moſt apparently conduce to the making them worſe. The Generality of Perſons miſtake the Nature of their *State* and *Condition* which they are in, and thence arrive not to a Solid Vertue and Piety. They cannot be truly Good becauſe they don't proceed on a Right Bottom, they are not apprehenſive of their own Natural Weakneſs and Inability: they are not convinced of the abſolute Neceſſity of the Divine Power and Energy: they are not perſuaded that they cannot be brought home to God but by his Irreſiſtible Hand. It is true, it is their Duty, their indiſpenſible Duty to exert and manage their Rational Faculties to the utmoſt, (for they were given them to that End) to endeavour to improve the Conviction they have attained to, and to make the beſt Uſe of all the Means of Salvation, and the Opportunities of receiving Good and Benefit to their Souls: but

but let them not think that theſe are the Work of Converſion, or that Converſion is in the Power of their Free Wills, as ſome have thought. It is GOD only that can make this Change in their Hearts and Wills.

Perhaps I may be thought to be Uncharitable and Cenſorious in ſuggeſting that ſome of our Divines own not the *Divine Grace* and *Supernatural Power* in Converſion; but I deſire it may be noted, that I do not ſay they *expreſsly aſſert* this in their Sermons and Writings: no, they would be thought to declare the contrary: but I charge them with This, that their *Great Principle* which they conſtantly maintain and defend directly and unavoidably leads them to aſſert ſo much. For their avowed Principle is this, that a *Freedom of Indifferency*, that is, a Freedom of Will to Spiritual Good, as well as Evil, is *Natural* and *Eſſential* to every *Man* as he is a *Man*; for without this Freedom they ſay a Man is no Rational Creature, nor capable of Reward or Puniſhment. It is This *Liberty of Will* which is of his very *Eſſence* and *Nature*, that makes him deſerve the one or the other.

This is held by all our *Arminian* Divines, and thence I have good Reaſon to infer that they deny the Neceſſity of Supernatural Help and Aſſiſtance. For if it be inſeparable from the very Nature of their Wills to chooſe or refuſe Spiritual Good, it neceſſarily follows thence that there is no need of Divine Grace and Supernatural Aid to enable them to chuſe Spiritual Good. They have it in their Own Power, becauſe this Liberty of the Will to embrace Good, to believe and repent is eſſential to that Faculty. Whence it muſt rationally be gathered by way of Neceſſary Inference and Natural Conſequence, that theſe Men hold that Divine Grace and Supernatural Aſſiſtance are needleſs in Converſion, or in any Acts of Religion; or if there be any occaſion for Divine Grace, the *Efficacy* of it depends

depends wholly on Man's *Will.* Thus they do not *give unto God the Things that are God's*, but they give them away to *Men:* they attribute that to Man's Will which is due only to God's Grace. 'Till any one can ſhew me the *Invalidity* of this Inference, I cannot but retain my former Thoughts and Perſuaſion concerning theſe Perſons.

But I muſt only Touch upon theſe Things, becauſe I have largely and often inſiſted on them at other Times. That which I urge now is that it is Impoſſible to regulate our Lives if we be ignorant of our Original State and Condition, of our Natural Inability and Depravity, if we have not a Knowledge and firm Perſuaſion concerning the *Diſtinguiſhing Grace* of God in Converſion and Sanctification. It is moſt certain that we ſhould have an underſtanding of this and the like Truths in ſome degree before we can enter upon any Good Action, before we can ſucceſsfully ſet about the Reforming of our Ways.

And that the Belief and Senſe of this doth conduce to a truly Vertuous and Godly Life, we may ſee in plain Examples. Thus the Soundneſs of Faith amongſt the *Firſt Chriſtians* contributed to the Strictneſs of their Lives. Such Doctrines as I have ſpoken of were nouriſhed by them, which in their own Nature promoted Godlineſs. The Sobriety of their Manners was advanced by the Purity of their Principles. So at the *Reformation*, from the Beginning of King *Edward* the VIth's Reign to the End of Queen *Elizabeth*'s it may partly be imputed to the Belief and Profeſſion of thoſe Orthodox Principles, that their Lives were much more Laudable than theſe of ours. They generally entertained theſe Doctrines which influenced on their Practices. But afterwards, when thoſe Truths and Principles were caſt off, and the contrary to them were eſpouſed, Irreligion and Immorality broke in like a Flood. The *Remonſtrant Opinions* and *Open*

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Profaneneſs grew up together. And particularly it is obſervable that the *profaning the Lord's Day* had the ſame Date with the Growth of *Arminianiſm* in a certain Prelate's Time. I could likewiſe take notice that in ſome Churches abroad, where thoſe ſound Doctrines have been lately diſcarded, they decline in their Manners, for that Reaſon already inſiſted on, That the Regulating of Mens Manners depends upon their Right Notions.

All our Projects of Reformation will be inſignificant without This. We ſhall never ſet Men into the right Way of amending their Lives, 'till we obſerve this. It was truly ſaid by that Excellent Father of the Primitive Church, * *Mens Lives will be Ill, if their Belief concerning God and Religion be not Right.* Our Morals will be defective, when our Knowledge is ſo. None will ever be ſubſtantially Good, 'till they are ſtocked with Right Principles. Upon which Account it is plain that the Goodneſs of Mens Manners in this Age, and the Extirpating of Immorality depend on the *Paſtoral Care.* Let your Pulpits be *Orthodox*, and your Pariſhioners will ſoon be *truly Religious.* Furniſh your ſelves and your Flock with True Principles; lay in Right Notions, and be not aſhamed of them. Clergymen ſhould ſhew Firmneſs and Conſtancy of Mind, and not leave off to preach and publiſh thoſe Doctrines which the Bleſſed *Reformers from Popery* taught and profeſſed; and this will inſpire the People with unſhaken Reſolution to believe and embrace them, and to conform their Lives to them. Let us build on *the Foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets*, and then we are ſure that our Structure will be firm and laſting. In a Word, let us bring back the *Old Divinity*, or elſe never expect the *Old Primitive Manners.* Thus we ſee the Neceſſity of this Firſt Head that I have propounded.

* Malè vivitur, ſi de Deo non bene creditur. *Auguſt. de Civ. Dei, l. 5. c. 10.*

II. Theſe Principles and Doctrines, and the ſeveral Duties relating to them and all other Parts of our Holy Religion muſt be delivered in that Way which will prove moſt *Prevalent* and *Succeſsful:* That is, they muſt be delivered, 1ſt, With all *Freedom* and *Plainneſs*; 2ly, With *Life* and *Vigour.*

1ſt, With all *Freedom* and *Plainneſs*, charging our Auditors home, diſcovering to them the Sinfulneſs and Danger of their State, diving into the Secrets of their Souls, ſearching the Wound to the bottom, laying the Axe to the Root. Some plauſible Harangues do but lightly touch the Sore, and deal wholly in the Surface: they brouſe and nibble on ſome Moral Topicks, but they do not go Through with the Buſineſs, they turn ſhort in the Midſt of the Work. Theſe are they that daub with untempered Mortar, and may be ſaid to compliment with their Hearers, rather than to preach to them. A great deal of Harm hath been done of late to Divine Truths by our being too formal and ſtarched in the delivering of them, or by flouriſhing too much upon them, and dreſſing them up in Quaint and Spruce Language, even in the Language of Plays and Romances. I cannot forbear telling the World that in my Opinion the Great Work of the Pulpit begins to decay. Fineneſs of Expreſſions and Elaborate Compoſures have thruſt out the main Deſign of appearing there. Preaching muſt not be to ſhew Wit and Pleaſantry; elſe the *Preacher* will do no more good than the *Tatler*, and the one may make Converts as ſoon as the other. This *Fine Preaching* will never do the Work, for hereby the Purity and Simplicity of Divine Truths are loſt, and conſequently the Vertue of them. The Stile of the Pulpit ought to be Solid, Subſtantial, Savoury: it ought to be Plain and Familiar, and even Homely ſometimes. For if ever there was an Age that needed *Plain-dealing*, moſt certainly This of Ours doth. The *Formaliſt* who depends

depends upon his mere Shew of Religion muſt be handled roughly. A mere *Civil* Man, who values himſelf upon his being free from Groſs Sins, whilſt he is a Stranger to True Goodneſs, muſt be ſeverely (I had almoſt ſaid, Uncivilly) dealt with; this being neceſſary to bring him to a lively Senſe of his Duty. How then ſhould we deal with the *Open* and *Profligate Tranſgreſſors* of our Times, who proclaim their Sin as *Sodom*, and hide it not, yea, boaſt of it, and glory in their Shame? They muſt be very Searching Diſcourſes and Home Strokes that are likely to touch the Hearts of ſuch Hardened Sinners as theſe. I am verily perſuaded that the Want of this Free and Impartial Uſage hath contributed towards the groſs Depravity of this Age.

We boaſt of *Apoſtolical* and *Primitive* Practices, but I ſhould rejoice to obſerve more of them. The *Primitive* Chriſtians thought themſelves obliged to ſhun all *Publick Shews* and *Comedies*, becauſe they were perſuaded that this kind of Paſtime bred and cheriſhed in them a light and looſe Spirit, Idleneſs, Vanity, Luſt and Wantonneſs, eſpecially if it be often frequented, and becomes their greateſt Delight, and they cannot ſpend their Hours without it. It tends to diſſolve the Maſculine Genius and Spirit of Men, and to nouriſh Immodeſty in the other Sex. I could reckon up Twenty *Fathers of the Church* who expreſs their Diſlike of theſe Entertainments, and adviſe People to deteſt all Stage-plays as unlawful: and half as many *Antient Councils* might be produced, who condemn all Diverſions of this Kind. *Mixed Dances* are diſallowed of by the moſt Pious Fathers, as utterly unbecoming Chriſtians; St. *Chryſoſtom* eſpecially is warm on this Subject. The Council of *Laodicea* is not *lukewarm* here, but utterly condemns theſe Sports. Modeſty teaches the other Sex not to appear with the ſame free Airs and Garb in the Aſſemblies for Divine Worſhip as they do at other times and at

their own Houſes. This is Apoſtolical and Primitive Advice in 1 *Cor.* xi. 5, &c, wherefore let me not be thought to be ſingular on this Subject. I am ſure I cannot be reckoned ſuch by any Perſons that have a Regard to the Holy Rule of our Lives left us by Chriſt and his Apoſtle, who bids us *abſtain from all Appearance of Evil*, 1 Theſ. v. 22. and would have *our Converſation be as becometh the Goſpel*, and particularly that the Behaviour of the Perſons before mentioned ſhould be ſuch as *becometh Women profeſſing Godlineſs*, 1 Tim. ii. 10. If we conſider theſe and the like Admonitions, we ſhall freely and impartially tell all Ranks of People their Duty, and not adapt our Diſcourſes to the corrupt Taſte of the Age.

But we are to be more exact yet, and to remember that the Rules of the Goſpel far exceed thoſe of the Moral Law, and that under the Chriſtian Inſtitution the Miniſters of the Church have a *Peculiar Work* allotted them, and that there are *Peculiar Doctrines* which they are to inſtruct the People in, and preſs the Practice of; ſuch Doctrines and Truths as carry in themſelves a perfect Reliſh of the *Goſpel Spirit*, as diſtinguiſhed from *mere Moral* Dictates: and they are ſuch as Theſe; Refraining from Idle and Unprofitable Words, Governing our very Thoughts, Self-examination, Watching over our Hearts, Fear and Jealouſy of ourſelves, Maintaining a conſtant Dependence on God, Obſerving the Divine Providence in all Occurrences, a Diſlike of all Sin and Vice as ſuch, a Love of all Good and Righteous Perſons as ſuch, Hearty Endeavours to advance the Intereſt of Chriſt in the World, Attributing all Good in us to the Divine Grace and the Help of the Holy Spirit, Relying wholly on the Merits of Chriſt, Making God's Glory the Aim of all our Actions, Performing our Duty with Choice and Pleaſure, Loving GOD for himſelf and his matchleſs Perfections, Reſiſting the Temptations

tions of Satan by Strength derived from the Almighty, Renouncing all Phariſaical Righteouſneſs, Relying on God's Promiſes in the way of Obedience, Giving no offence to weak Brethren, Making all Worldly Objects and Secular Concerns ſerviceable to Religion, Being Cautious and Wary even in the Uſe of Lawful Things, Subduing Spiritual Pride and Preſumptuous Conceits of our own Sufficiency, Exalting the Riches of God's Mercy and Free Grace, Striving to attain to greater Meaſures and Degrees of Holineſs, Perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God. Here is a brief Scheme of *Chriſtianity* as it exceeds the Laws of mere *Natural Religion.*

Nay, we are to know that many of the Principles and Maxims of the Goſpel are Paradoxes and Seeming Contradictions. To be Saved by an Other's Righteouſneſs looks very odd. Some of the main Things of the Evangelical Law paſs for Incongruities and Abſurdities; as that thoſe that *Mourn*, and thoſe that are *Perſecuted* are *Bleſſed*, that *he who ſaves his Life ſhall loſe it, and he that loſes it for Chriſt's ſake ſhall ſave it.* What can be more croſs to the ordinary Reaſonings of Men than that of the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* iii. 18. *If any Man among you ſeem to be Wiſe, let him become a Fool* (and which is yet more ſtrange) *that he may be Wiſe.* If Folly be the way to Wiſdom, then the Number of Wiſe Men is far greater than was imagined. How unaccountably doth the ſame Apoſtle ſeem to ſpeak in 2 *Cor.* xii. 10. *When I am Weak, then am I Strong.* As ſtrange a Riddle is that in *Gal.* ii. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.* A Chriſtian is a Kind of Contradiction, *he liveth*, and yet (as it is ſaid of the Wanton Widow, but in an other Senſe) *he is dead while he lives.* This Inſpired Author ſpeaks *of ſeeing him who is Inviſible*, Heb. xi. 27. which is a Contradiction in the very Terms. Somewhat a kin to this is what the ſame Holy Writer

ſaith in *Rom.* iv. 18, that *Abraham againſt Hope believed in Hope.*

Many other Paradoxes and Surprizing Sayings might be inſtanced in, but I wave them at preſent, and only deſire this may be conſidered, that if theſe Paſſages in Holy Scripture be ſuch Riddles to the *Underſtanding* of Carnal Men, how much more Strange and Startling are they to the *Wills* and *Affections* of thoſe Perſons? They are hard to be Conceived and Apprehended, but a great deal harder to be Practiſed. And this gives an Account of the Unchriſtian Lives of the Generality of thoſe that call themſelves Chriſtians. Why? becauſe there are very few that live as thoſe that are under the Goſpel Diſpenſation, which requires Greater, far Greater Things of us than the Law of *Moſes* or of Nature exacts of us.

But is it not the Fault of ſome of us, who are the Publick Inſtructors and Guides of the People, that ſo few live up to the *Evangelical Rules*, becauſe we do not ſufficiently Inſiſt on *theſe*, but dwell moſt on Principles of Natural Religion, and talk more like Philoſophers than Miniſters of the Goſpel? We ought to take care that our Sermons have the Air and Stile of the New Teſtament, and that we impart unto our Hearers the true Senſe and Meaning of theſe Sacred Writings, and urge and preſs upon them the *Peculiar Duties* which are there commended to us, and that with great *Vigour* and *Earneſtneſs*. And ſo I paſs to the next Particular.

Secondly, Theſe Chriſtian Principles, Inſtructions and Duties muſt be delivered not only with *Plainneſs*, but with *Warmth* and *Vigour*, if we really deſign to make a *Reformation* in Mens Manners. The Stile of the Pulpit muſt be Lively and Moving, and have a good deal of the *Pathetick* in it, that is, it muſt be able to ſtir the Affections and Paſſions. I have before mentioned ſeveral *Strong Holds*, and now I muſt

muſt tell you that theſe cannot be taken from the Enemy without *Vigorous Onſets* and *Violent Attacks*. We muſt Storm theſe Caſtles, and when we have taken them, we muſt give the Enemy no Quarter. It is obſerved that within theſe forty or fifty Years the *Apoplexy* hath ſeized greater Numbers of Men than in former Times; (the Reaſon of which I ſhall not enquire into at preſent;) and it may as eaſily be obſerved that an other and more dangerous Sort of Apoplectick Diſtemper, which deprives Men both of Senſe and Motion, is every where prevalent, and is more Common now than heretofore. A great Indolence and Stupidity hath poſſeſſed the Minds of Men, and they are wholly Careleſs of their Duty and greateſt Concern. I conceive this may be aſcribed in ſome meaſure to the Slight and Superficial Way of the Pulpit. Ever ſince this Kind of Preaching hath come into faſhion, we have grown Degenerate. Religion is at very low Ebb, and the Diſſoluteneſs of Manners was never more Notorious than in this preſent Generation. What is the Cauſe of this? The Hearers come away from Sermons as they went to them, that is, never the Better, but oftentimes Worſe. For theſe *Cold Treats* do but nouriſh and pamper Mens Luſts and Evil Diſpoſitions; and the more they are reliſhed, the greater is the Hurt done by them. As the *Popiſh Maſs* heretofore pleaſed Men, becauſe it did not *bite*, ſo theſe Sermons are acceptable to Some for the ſame Reaſon; they are not Biting and Piercing, they do not move and ſtir the Hearers, they make no Impreſſion on their Paſſions.

I ſpeak not in favour of any thing that is clamorous and noiſy, and I deteſt all Theatrical and Comical Geſtures in the Pulpit: But decent Motion and Livelineſs are abſolutely Neceſſary. This Age muſt be awakened out of their Sleep, out of their Lethargy; they muſt be rouzed and alarmed. Which cannot be done by thoſe that are drowſy

themſelves, but by ſuch as are perfectly awake, and have a true Senſe of their Duty. This will give them Life and Spirit, and make them ſpeak as thoſe that are in good Earneſt, and are thoroughly perſwaded of what they endeavour to perſwade others to.

This was the Way of the Old Prophets, this was the Way of the Apoſtles, and a ſucceſsful Effect followed it. The Firſt Preachers of the Goſpel were warm themſelves, and thereby infuſed Heat into their Auditors, and inſpired them with an active Zeal in Religion. Such Preachers were thoſe famous Lights of the Church, *Athanaſius*, *Baſil*, *Gregory Nazienzen*, and *Gregory Nyſſen*; *Ambroſe*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Auguſtine*. Such afterwards were *Luther* and *Calvin*: Such after them in our Nation were Biſhop *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Bradford*, *Deering*, *Gilpin*, Biſhop *Jewel*, *Perkins*, *Bains*, *Bolton*; Biſhop *Babington*, Biſhop *Davenant*, *Ward*, *Pemble*, *Capel*, *Preſton*, *Sibbs*, and Biſhop *Hall*: And ſince that Time, great Numbers of skilful Labourers have been ſent into the Harveſt, who delivered the Word with Primitive and Apoſtolick Zeal, and have broken in upon Sinners by Force, and with their holy Thunder have ſhocked the moſt deſperate of them, and have kept their Auditors awake whether they would or no. Pray we that the Lord of the Harveſt would ſend forth plenty of ſuch Labourers, who with Vivacity and Vigour may aſſert the Cauſe of God and Religion. For it is not ſufficient that the Preaching be Orthodox, unleſs it be with Spirit and Concern. Which latter may be promoted and advanced, by ſeriouſly conſidering what is the *True End* and *Deſign* of Preaching, namely, to call and gather Men out of the *World* into the *Church*, that there they may be *ſaved*. A Preacher's grand Aim muſt be to convert Souls, and to confirm them in the Grace which they have received, and to prepare them for everlaſting

laſting Happineſs. He cannot be cold and remiſs in his Office when he thinks of this; he cannot but be intimately touched with Compaſſion, Charity, and Zeal for the Good and Welfare of Mens Souls; he cannot but ſtrive to make them feel the Power of Divine Truths on their Hearts; in a Word, he will exert his utmoſt Power to ſave the Flock which Jeſus Chriſt, the Great Shepherd, hath entruſted him with. This is what the Apoſtle means by *Preaching and Teaching in all Wiſdom*, Col. i. 28. that is, in the moſt edifying Way; for that is the *wiſeſt* Way.

III. An other true Way to Reform the Lives of the main Body of this Nation is this; That all of us who are Miniſters of the Goſpel, be concerned to *conform our Lives to the holy Rules and Doctrines which we preach*; that we be *Examples to the Flock*; that we be Patterns of Self-denial, Mortification, Sobriety, and Contempt of the World; and that we give our ſelves up wholly to the Work of the Miniſtry. And truly this is Work enough. To take upon us the Care of Mens Souls; to deliver the whole Will of God to them; to adminiſter to them in every Thing Neceſſary to their Spiritual Welfare in ſo great and weighty an Employment, that it will engroſs all our Time, and not leave us Leiſure for any other Buſineſs. Thoſe who have any Regard to the Primitive Uſage, let them conſult thoſe *Fathers* of the Chriſtian Church, *Cyprian* *, *Ambroſe* †, *Jerom* ||, who heartily declare their Diſlike of Clergymen's taking upon them *Secular Employments*. And it was the Judgement of the Antient Chriſtians, (to which their Practice was agreeable) that One Congregation or Church was a ſufficient Charge for one Perſon to take upon him. And thoſe Laws of the Chriſtians which forbad all Clergymen to tranſgreſs this Practice, render this

* Epiſt. paſſim. † De fugâ Seculi. || Epiſt. 2. ad Nepotian.

as

as the Reaſon of it; That to act thus is § *proper only to worldly Negotiation, and a Love of filthy Lucre, and is that Cuſtom which the Church is a Stranger to.* I wiſh thoſe who profeſs themſelves great Admirers of *Antient* and *Primitive* Practices in the Church, would read what the *Fathers* and *Councils* have determined on this Head, and then conſider how uncanonical and how unbecoming a Churchman it is to truck for Livings, to heap up Benefices, and to engroſs Eccleſiaſtical Preferments, Dignities, and Promotions.

To this Purpoſe let us hear what a worthy Perſon of our Church hath publiſhed to the World *; "The ſcandalous Ways", ſaith he, "by which "generally Pluralities are obtained, are Simony, "Fraud, baſe Inſinuations, diſhonourable Marri-"ages, and other ſuch like ill Arts; ſo that Men of "Worth and Merit, who ſcorn ſuch Methods, ſel-"dom come by any of them; but they are moſt "commonly engroſſed by ſuch of the Clergy, who "are ſo far from deſerving Two Livings, that moſt "an end they are unworthy of having any at all". He adds further, "The People ſeeing ſo many of "the Clergy graſping at all the Benefices they "can get, out of a covetous and rapacious Mind "only to enjoy the Profits without diſcharging the "Duty, from hence are apt to think the worſe of "the whole Order, as if they were a mean and "baſe Sort of People, who care not what they do "to advance their own By-intereſt. And if thoſe "who enquire into the Cauſes of the Contempt "and Diſeſteem which Miniſters have generally "here among us, more than in any other Chriſtian "State, would lay the main Streſs hereof on this "Point only, perchance they would not be much "out". Again, "When they ſee Clergymen ſo

§ Ἐμπορίας γὰρ καὶ αἰσχροκερδίας ἴδιον τοῦτο, καὶ ἀλλότριον ἐκκλησιαστικῆς συνηθείας. Concil. Nicen. 2. Can. 15.

* Dr. *Prideaux*, Reaſons againſt Pluralities of Benefices.

"fre-

" frequently ſacrificing Religion to their Gain, as " all Pluraliſts do, they argue from thence that " the Miniſters themſelves do not believe the Re- " ligion which they teach, but that the whole of " it is only a Trick to get Money, and an Artifice " contrived and kept up only to ſupport that Or- " der of Men that is maintained by it. And the late " Earl of *Rocheſter* acknowledged on his Death-bed, " as we have it publickly atteſted, That this was " one of the main Cauſes that made him an Atheiſt". Thus this excellent Writer. And from this it appears that I had Reaſon to ſuggeſt the Neceſſity of *Reformation in the Clergy* as to this Matter, in order to a *Reformation of Manners among the People.* For whilſt they ſee ſuch a Practice among the Clergy, they will be tempted to deſpiſe all their Exhortations to Vertue and Goodneſs, and to ſay to their Spiritual Phyſician, *Cure thy ſelf.*

Suffer me to enlarge a little on this Head, that I may convince ſome of my Brethren of the Unreaſonableneſs and Sinfulneſs of their being *Abſent from their Flocks*, which neceſſarily follows from their being *Pluraliſts.* The Apoſtle ſaith, *He that plants a Vineyard*, hath Right thereby *to eat of the Fruit of it*, and *he that feedeth a Flock*, is to *eat of the Milk of the Flock*, 1 Cor. ix. 7. But theſe Perſons neither *plant*, nor *feed*, and yet demand *Fruit* and *Milk. He that ploweth*, is ſaid by the ſame Apoſtle *to plow in hope*, ver. 10. That is, in hope of receiving a Recompence for his Pains, whereby he may be encouraged in his *Work*, which is the main Thing he is to attend to and take care of: And *he that threſheth in Hope*, ought to be *Partaker of his Hope.* He adds, they *that ſow unto* their Hearers *Spiritual Things*, may juſtly *reap their Carnal Things*, ver. 11. But theſe Men neither *plow*, nor *threſh*, nor *ſow*, and yet they entertain *Hopes* of reaping the Benefit which attends thoſe Labours: they diſtribute no *Spiritual Things*, and yet greedily look for

thoſe

thoſe that are *carnal*; thoſe that will bring worldly Profit to them. Can any thing be more unreaſonable, more unjuſt, more unchriſtian than this? For the Tithes and all other Maintenance allowed to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, are wholly in Conſideration of the Work they are to do. Wherefore, where their Maintenance is, there ſhould be their Labours; for the Maintenance is to ſupport them in their Labours. And therefore they cannot in Reaſon and Conſcience demand the Former, if they neglect the Latter; that is, if they do not faithfully diſcharge their Duty as they are Miniſters. And it is impoſſible they ſhould do this, if they be *Abſent* from their Flocks, and, in Conſequence of that, do not take care to feed them.

And how abſurd is this, that the *Members* of the Congregation ſhall meet together, and the *Head* of it be abſent? that the *Flock* ſhall be gathered together, but the *Paſtor* not be found among them? This is ſo Ridiculous, as well as Vitious, that it would aſtoniſh any Man to ſee this actually done in a Chriſtian Church, in a Proteſtant Church. And can any Pariſhioner who takes notice of his Miniſter's voluntary abſenting himſelf from his Flock, think that he hath any Reaſon to blame *him* if he ſtays at home, or gads abroad when he ſhould be at Church? No: the *Miniſter* is as much obliged in Duty and Conſcience to be preſent with his People, as *they* are to be preſent with him. And will not this be taken notice of and improved by ſuch as are inclined to diſſent from our Church, and can a Miniſter complain of his Pariſhioners leaving *him* when he leaves *them*?

But it will be ſaid, the Miniſter employs a Curate to do the Work for him, and that is a ſufficient Salvo for his Conſcience. I am afraid he will not find it ſo at laſt, when he is called to give an account of his Stewardſhip. Do not we of the Clergy ſay that we are *Succeſſors* to the Apoſtles

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and Primitive Paſtors in teaching and feeding the Flock of Chriſt; and can we be their *True Succeſſors* if we do not teach them and feed them? or is it ſufficient that we put in Hirelings to look after the Flock, though we have ſolemnly taken upon us the Charge of Spiritual Shepherds? Is this *Watching for Mens Souls, as thoſe that muſt give an Account*? Or is it poſſible to give an Account when they do not watch at all? Chriſt came down from Heaven to ſave Mens Souls, and theſe Men will not ſtir from their Places of Preferment to take care of thoſe Souls. Can any rational Man think that the Fathers of our Church, when they intruſted them with the Care of Souls, intended that they ſhould act thus, that they ſhould live on the Flock which they do not care to feed? This was abhorred by all the Chriſtian Paſtors in the ſeveral Ages of the Goſpel. And juſtly it might, becauſe this Practice hath its Riſe from *Idleneſs* and *Covetouſneſs*, two very ill Properties in a Miniſter of Chriſt.

And more particularly the *latter* of theſe is plainly ſeen in their allowing ſo ſhort Maintenance generally to thoſe that diſcharge the Office for them, whom they are wont to put off with poor Stipends. I ſpeak not this of All our Churchmen, for the Generous Spirit of Some of them is well known. It is Amazing that they who with ſevere Reprimands fall upon the *Laity* when they find them Griping the Poor, and treating them hardly, ſhould be ſo hard-hearted towards their poor Brethren, of their own Character, yea, though they do all the Work that is incumbent on themſelves to do. I beſeech you, my Brethren, do not expoſe your ſelves to the Scorn and Laughter of the World by ſuch Behaviour as this. You have preached and writ ſometimes againſt *Sacrilege* very laudably; but is it not *Sacrilege* to rob thoſe of the ſame Order with yourſelves? yea, is it not the worſt Kind of Sacrilege to alienate the Church's Revenues, which

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are due to thoſe that perform the Offices of the Church, and not to you? You cry out againſt thoſe *Laymen* who have the Profit of Benefices in their Hands; but are not you Self-condemned when you demand and receive thoſe Profits and Incomes which belong not to you, but to thoſe that diſcharge that Office? I humbly beg of you to conſider this, and to prevent this Scandal for the future. Let not the Clergy hunt after Pluralities, and practiſe *the Art of Intriguing for Preferment*, as Mr. *Nelſon* in the Life of Biſhop *Bull* calls it; let them reſide on the Place where their Cure of Souls is, and attend there the Service of God and his Church. This was ever acknowledged to be their Duty by all Chriſtian Churches in the World, by the Decrees of Antient Councils, and above all, by the Rules and Directions of the Goſpel. If it be otherwiſe, eſpecially of late among the *Popiſh* Clergy, it becomes not *Us* of the *Proteſtant* and *Reformed* Profeſſion to imitate this Practice, and to bring the *World* with its Pomp and Grandour into the *Church*, and to act ſo unſuitably to our Holy Function. If we follow ſuch Examples, we muſt never expect a Bleſſing on our Miniſtry.

Again, as we muſt not *get* our Incomes unlawfully, ſo we muſt not *ſpend* them in that way. This (as well as what I mentioned before) is Alienating the Church's Goods and Endowments, and is no other than *Sacrilege*. For hereby the Patrimony of the Church is employed to a Uſe contrary to the Will of the Donors, who originally devoted it to God and his Worſhip, and not to Idleneſs, Intemperance and Riot; not to Secular Pomp and Splendour. Some of the Gazing and Aſtoniſhed Vulgar may admire and applaud this way of living, eſpecially if they receive any Benefit by it; but all Wiſe and Thinking Men deſpiſe and abhor it, and I doubt not but the Eccleſiaſticks themſelves inwardly condemn it, and tacitly

tacitly ſay with that Cardinal, *If the People will be deceived, let them be deceived.* They cannot help thinking that this is a horrible Deluſion when they remember that a Churchman by his very Office is a Spiritual Man, and ſet apart to the more Immediate Service of God and his Church, and therefore he muſt keep himſelf unſpotted from the World, and from thoſe degenerate Practices which are allowed in it, yea, even from thoſe which are generally tolerated. Thus the *Canons* of our Church forbid Clergymen to *play at Cards or Dice.* Can. 75. And our Church requires that *Miniſters always do the Things which appertain to Honeſty, and endeavour to profit the Church of God, having always in mind that they ought to Excell all others in Purity of Life, and be Examples to the People to live well and Chriſtianly.* 75th Can. This is the Godly Leſſon which our Mother the Church of *England* teaches us; and let us perfectly learn it. Inſtead of magnifying the *Prieſthood* (which is the thread-bare Topick of late in ſome of our Pulpits) inſtead of the Laviſh and Fulſom Encomiums which we beſtow on ourſelves and our Function, let us chiefly mind the *Duty* of it, and Live as Holy Miniſters of Chriſt *Jeſus*, let us encourage Religion and the Worſhip of God in our Families, and not place *All* in coming daily to the Publick Aſſemblies. Let us be Uniform and Impartial in our ſerving of God, let us betake ourſelves to preaching Sound Doctrine, and living exemplary Lives, and let us carefully ſhun all the Liberties of a Looſe Converſation. Let none of us be thought to have need of learning our Catechiſm again, wherein we promiſe *to renounce the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, with all Covetous Deſires of the ſame.* Are thoſe fit to preach the Goſpel, to adminiſter the Sacraments, to converſe about Holy Things, to convert Souls, who indulge themſelves in the Love of the World, in Luxury, Pride and Wantonneſs?

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Are theſe Diſciples of that Maſter who was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners.*

The beſt of us may here cry *Guilty*, and we may own the juſt Judgement of God in ſuffering a late Writer among us to vilify *the Rigths of the Chriſtian Church* properly ſo called, and to ſet up the Civil Magiſtrate in oppoſition to the Miniſtry of the Church, and to turn Eccleſiaſtical Encloſures into Lay Commons. Have we not deſerved this ſtrange Uſage! Is it not juſt that ſome ſhould be permitted to ridicule the *Diſtinction of Clergy and Laity*, when ſo many of us diſtinguiſh not ourſelves from the worſt of Laymen by our Lives and Practices? We make no *Difference* ourſelves; how then can we expect that others ſhould? Is it ſtrange that *Others* explode the Sacred Order of the Evangelical Miniſtry, and other Inſtitutions and Ordinances of the Goſpel, when *We* have ſo often Abuſed and Prophaned them Ourſelves? It is *We* that have given Occaſion to the late Author of the *Diſcourſe of Free Thinking* to defame the Chriſtian Church: it is *We* that have adminiſtered Matter for thoſe Scoffs and Railleries which we now complain of. This is deſervedly come upon us, becauſe we have not taken care to conform our Lives to the holy Rules of our Excellent Church. If we obſerve not theſe, we vainly uſurp the honourable Title of *Clergymen*; for by a Diſſolute and Profane Life the Dignity of our Office will be blemiſhed, the Eminency of our Character will be ſunk, the Orthodoxy of our Articles will be marred, the Devout Prayers of our Liturgy will be inſignificant, our Preaching will be but an Empty Sound, our Sacraments will be prophaned, the Uniformity and Decency of our Worſhip will be ſullied, our White Garments will be ſtained and defiled, and in ſhort, our Lives will be *Uncanonical* though our *Service* be the contrary. Let us then ſtudy to render ourſelves every ways acceptable to God and Men, and let all thoſe that

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ſee us know us to be *Clergymen* by the Brightneſs of our Example: and thereby we ſhall conſult the True Intereſt and Proſperity of the Church of *England*, of which we have the honour to be Members, and we ſhall take the effectual Courſe to bring back the Primitive Purity into Mens Lives, and (which is the Thing I am all along aiming at) to *Reform* this Nation.

Here I would beg leave to urge this one Thing more particularly, namely, that we ought to be very Exact in our *Keeping the Lord's Day*, and by our Practice to prevail with others to do the like. Which I the rather mention becauſe it is ſad to call to mind how ſome of our Churchmen heretofore were guilty in this Matter by allowing of *Sports* and *Revels* on that Day: and even ſtill there are thoſe among us that own not the Divine Authority of the Chriſtian Sabbath, though there is a particular *Poſitive Command* for ſanctifying the *Seventh Day*, and there is the Practice of our Saviour and his Apoſtles for changing *one* Seventh Day for an *other*, and keeping it Holy, which is a ſufficient Proof of the *Divine Inſtitution* of that Day. Some have made the Obſervation of the Lord's Day a Great *Controverſy*, but in my judgement the Deciſion of it is plain and eaſy, namely, that by vertue of the Fourth Commandment that Day is to be kept Holy becauſe it is a *Seventh Day*, which is expreſsly mentioned in that Commandment; and likewiſe becauſe it is that *Seventh Day* which by Divine Appointment, that is, of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, was ſubſtituted in the room of the other. It ſeems to me very plain and evident that our Lord by his chuſing the Firſt Day of the Week for the particular Day of his riſing from the Dead, and of his ſending down the Holy Ghoſt, and not chuſing any other Day of the Week for theſe Solemn Works, doth ſufficiently acquaint us that this ſhould be the Day, of all the Days in the Week, wherein his Followers ought

to worſhip him in a more Solemn and Publick manner through all Generations, and that the *Jewiſh* Sabbath ſhould ceaſe for ever. And beſides, the Practice of Chriſt and his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, and of the Apoſtles after his Aſcenſion, are manifeſt Proofs to all unprejudiced Minds that this Day was of Divine Inſtitution, and is to be perpetually obſerved. Take away the due Obſervation of this Day, and the Chriſtian Religion itſelf will be in danger. We cannot but take notice that thoſe who make no Conſcience of violating this Commandment, are generally Breakers of all the reſt. Wherefore if we ſincerely intend and endeavour the Reformation of Mens Lives, and the promoting and eſtabliſhing of True Religion in this Nation, let us think ourſelves concerned to preſs the ſolemn keeping of this Day, to remind our Charge of the Particular Duties which this Day calls for, to be very Earneſt with them that they do nothing unworthy of this Great Solemnity, to let them know that it is a great Fault among us that our Publick Devotions are immediately followed with Idle Chat, and Impertinent Viſits, and Vain Converſation.

If it be ſuggeſted (as I find it is) that the Lord's Day is better obſerved in *England* than in any other *Proteſtant* Country, yea, than in *Holland*, and even in *Geneva*; I anſwer, that I am not fully ſatisfied as to the Truth of this Allegation; but ſuppoſe it to be True, yet this undue Behaviour of others doth not excuſe us from our Duty. I could name a Country which is very near us, and lately united to us, which far ſurpaſſes *Us* in the Obſervation of this Day. I heartily wiſh our Union with them in this reſpect, as well as others. And this cannot be more ſucceſsfully effected by us than by our frequent urging and inculcating the Neceſſity and Advantage of this divine Performance.

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It is a Remarkable Paſſage which I lately met with in the Narrative of the *Propagation of the Goſpel in the Eaſt*, Part 2. written by one of the *German* Divines that were ſent to convert the Heathens in *Malabar*: *Theſe People*, ſaith he, *becauſe they ſee the Chriſtians purſue their wonted Pleaſure preſently after Divine Service, have from thence taken up a Notion, as if the Chriſtian Preachers in their ordinary Sermons did teach the People all thoſe Vices and Debaucheries, and encourage them in ſuch a diſſolute Courſe of Life.* Theſe poor Infidels had ſo much Senſe as to apprehend that if the Lord's Day was ſet apart for holy Worſhip, the Miniſters of that Religion ſhould teach the Worſhippers not to profane it by lewd Pleaſures: or if theſe were practiſed, it might be inferred thence that their Preachers taught them ſo to do. We ought then to be very careful that no ſuch Imputation be fixed upon *us* by reaſon of our Silence or Connivance in this Matter, or much more by our favouring and juſtifying Recreations and Sports on this Day. And let me add this, We cannot preach heartily for the ſtrict Obſerving of the Lord's Day, unleſs we ſtrictly obſerve it *ourſelves*.

And ſo as to all other Inſtances of Religious Behaviour, we muſt ſet the People an Example, if we truly deſire their Reformation. There is a Text to this purpoſe, which I never find taken notice of, and therefore I the rather mention it, 1 *Cor.* iv. 17. where the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians* that he hath ſent unto them *Timothy*, who *ſhall bring them into remembrance of his ways which be in Chriſt, as he teaches every where in every Church.* By *his ways which are in Chriſt* he means his Chriſtian Practice and Courſe of Life, and theſe *ways* (he ſaith) are *as he teaches in all Churches*, that is, they are anſwerable to the conſtant Tenour of his Preaching. Every Paſtor ſhould *Live* as he *Teaches*. And ſo it was generally in thoſe firſt Times of Chriſtianity;

which had this good Effect, that the Regularity of the Lives of the People was anſwerable to the exemplary Lives and Manners of the Clergy. And indeed the Chriſtians in thoſe days took care to have ſuch Spiritual Guides and Inſtructors as they might imitate: for in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity the People choſe their Miniſters, and had none uſually ſet over them but thoſe that they approved of. This Election of their Paſtors prevailed in all the Chriſtian Churches a long time, and was commended by *Fathers* and *Councils*. Thus they had Paſtors whom they could confide in and follow, and it is queſtionable which of theſe two they were moſt edified and improved by, the Doctrine or the Practice of their Teachers. With reference to the latter, the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian ſpeaks thus concerning *Chryſoſtom*, the famous Paſtor and Biſhop of the Church at *Conſtantinople*, † *By his divine and holy Life he inſtilled into and ſtirred up in his Auditors an Imitation of his own Vertuous Behaviour.*

Let us of the Clergy read this with Attention, and be convinced that the Lives of the Laity will never be thoroughly amended, 'till Ours be ſo firſt. The Emperor *Julian* complains in one of his Epiſtles, alledged by † *Sozomen*, that it was the Fault of the Heathen Prieſts, who were *Vitious* and *Scandalous in their Lives*, that *Heatheniſm* did not increaſe, and was not ſo Propagated as he wiſhed and deſired. I wiſh there were not much more occaſion to complain of the little Progreſs made by *Chriſtianity* by reaſon of the Irregularity of thoſe Perſons Lives who are Publick Inſtructors of the People. For if our Peoples *Ears* are open to hear us declame againſt Avarice and Luxury,

* Θεώως γὰρ πολιτευόμενον τὸν ἐκ τῆς οἰκείας ἀρετῆς ἐνετίθει ζῆλον τοῖς ἀκροαταῖς. Sozom. lib. 8. cap. 2.

† Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 15.

and

and Love of the World, and the like Diſorders, we cannot but be ſenſible that their *Eyes* are alſo open to ſee how our Lives and Actions contradict this. Wherefore it is not enough that we be not Impious and Wicked, but we muſt be ſingularly Pious and Religious, we muſt learn from the Apoſtle to *give no Offence in any thing, that the Miniſtry be not blamed*, 2 Cor. vi. 3. that our holy Office and Function be not diſparaged and rendered contemptible by our Default, by our offenſive Carriage, by acting contrary to our Complaints againſt others. For it hath been obſerved by all wiſe Men that * nothing is more ſhameful and miſchievous than when the Reproof and Accuſation flies back in the Face of the Reprover. If by the Looſneſs of our Manners we tranſgreſs the divine Laws, we preach againſt our ſelves, and at the ſame time diſcourage our Hearers from entering into a ſtrict Courſe of Life. Such Practices of Eccleſiaſticks will quite ruine Religion, which is half ruined already. To conclude; There cannot be a greater Encouragement to Vice and Diſſolute Living than the diſordered Lives of the Clergy. But I am ſenſible that I have exceeded my Meaſures in enlarging on this Third Head, and therefore I will repair that Fault by contracting the Remainder of what I intend to offer to you.

IV. An other Thing that is neceſſary for the reforming the Manners of this Generation is to *caſt out Scandalous Offenders from the Communion of the Church.* Inſtead of exerciſing this Penalty in an arbitrary way, and on unwarrantable and needleſs Occaſions (as hath been too often practiſed), the Officers of the Church ought to uſe it only for the puniſhing and reclaiming of thoſe who tranſgreſs the Expreſs Laws of the Chriſtian Religion, and

† Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀιχιόν ἐσι βλασφημίας παλινδρομέσης ἐδὲ λυπηρότερον. Plutarch.

live in the Practice of what is a Shame and Diſhonour to it. Our Saviour himſelf appointed that if Diſorders and Offences could not be remedied by Chriſtians privately among themſelves, then they muſt *tell it to the Church*; and if the Offender neglect *to hear the Church*, he is to be looked upon *as a Heathen Man and a Publican*, Mat. xviii. 15, &c. that is, he is not to be reckoned as one of the Chriſtian Members, but he is to be ejected out of their Communion. This Diſcipline was enjoined and practiſed by the Paſtors afterwards, as may be ſeen in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles; where we read that this Publick Cenſure was executed by the Paſtor and Congregation, and is called *purging out the old Leaven*, and *putting away from them the wicked Perſon*, 1 Cor. v. 7, 13. And in the immediately ſucceeding Ages the Chriſtian Paſtors would not ſuffer any of their Flock to remain in the Fold, if they diſcovered them to be wholly unworthy of that Priviledge: whence it was that in thoſe early Times of the Chriſtian Church there was ſo viſible a Face of Religion and Practical Piety.

And as this was one great thing that kept up the Purity of the Church in *thoſe* Days, ſo it would effectually do it *now*, if it were rightly and duely executed, and if Men were brought to ſtand in awe of that Sacred Thunder, and were made ſenſible how deplorable and dangerous their Caſe is if they be excluded from the Company of the Faithful, and be cut off from the Society of the Church of Chriſt. On the contrary, it muſt needs nouriſh Impiety and Profaneneſs to ſee that all Men alike are admitted into the Communion of the Church, and there remain, notwithſtanding their groſs Delinquences and Miſcarriages. When Whoremongers, Drunkards and Swearers are permitted to come to the Houſe of God, and ſit there as his People ſit, they cannot but have a good Opinion of themſelves, and their State; and are thence encouraged to per-

perſevere ſtill in their Vices. One Cauſe of the General Corruption of the Old World was the *Mixture of the Sons of God with the Daughters of Men:* the Families of *Cain* and *Seth* were blended by a promiſcuous Intercourſe and Converſation. So at this day many of thoſe that profeſs to be of the Church, to be devoted to Religion, mix themſelves with the openly profane and profeſſed Libertines; and theſe latter are not debarred the external Priviledges which belong only to the Pure and Righteous. To hinder and prevent which, we muſt let them know that there is a Difference between the *World* and the *Church*, and that it is the true Notion and eſſential Character of a *Church* to be called out from the World, and to be ſeparated from the Society of the Wicked: and the Church-Cenſure which I am ſpeaking of will effectually convince Men of this.

And as this is neceſſary at all times, ſo eſpecially at this, when we blame ſo many Perſons for ſeparating from our Church-Communion, and yet we ſuffer the vileſt Men to be in Communion with us, who juſtly deſerve to be ſeparated from us. The Table of the Lord ſhould eſpecially be barred againſt the Prophane, and thoſe that are wholly unfit for thoſe Sacred Myſteries. We generally miſtake the true End and Uſe of this Sacrament; for it was ordained to *confirm* Perſons in Goodneſs and Holineſs, but they muſt be Good and Holy firſt before they are confirmed. It is a falſe Notion that this Sacrament will confer Grace on thoſe that have none; and accordingly many are perſuaded to repair to this Table, that they may be made Religious and Vertuous: and they think they are Religious enough if they come hither. But theſe and all others muſt be told that they muſt firſt ſhew by their Lives that they are conformable to the Rules of the Goſpel, and *then* they may partake of theſe Sacred Myſteries: otherwiſe they are not

Fit to approach to them; and if they do, they will be ſo far from receiving Benefit by them, that they will grow worſe than they were before. We ſhould not promiſcuouſly admit Perſons, much leſs force them to be Members of the Church; for (as hath been ſaid) we muſt keep up the Diſtinction between the *World* and the *Church*. Which ſhews the Neceſſity of the foreſaid Diſcipline for the Preſervation of the Church's Purity, and advancing the Credit of Religion. The Being of a Church cannot be upheld without this. Chriſtianity would ſoon be deſtroyed if we ſhould let all Perſons, without exception, repair to theſe Myſteries; and the Church would be the Common Redezvous of the Libertines and Profane. In brief, there is a double End and Deſign in Excommunication; 1. that Offenders may be humbled and grieved for their Faults, and thence be prepared to forſake them. 2. That others, ſeeing their Faults and the Puniſhment which attends them, may be deterred from offending in the like Kind. Thus it is plain that the chaſtiſing of Criminals with this Paſtoral Rod is a proper Means of Reforming them. If this were put in practice, it would give a new Life and Spirit to Religion. And it is further plain that 'till Church Cenſures are revived, and made uſe of in that manner which they ſhould, we ſhall not have any conſiderable Amendment in Mens Lives.

V. A *Perfect Agreement in the Publick Worſhip and Service of God* is a great Help to *Reformation*. By this perfect Agreement I mean that all Proteſtant Churches ſhould not make any Thing a Real Part of their Religious Worſhip, but what Chriſt and his Apoſtles have thought fit to appoint and ordain. This one Thing, which is ſo Rational and Accountable, would wonderfully advance the Practice of Religion in all Reformed Countries, and in our own particularly; for if we can all unanimouſly

unanimouſly join in our Prayers, and other Exerciſes of Devotion, we ſhall unite together in promoting a holy Life. Our Agreement in Acts of Publick Worſhip will naturally produce this, as it cements us together in Brotherly Affection, Good Will and Charity, which are ſo conſiderable a Part of True Holineſs, and as it fits us for diſcharging all the Duties that are required of us. We ſhould heartily wiſh for this Concord in the Church of Chriſt, which will be ſerviceable to moderate our Heats, and abate our Contentions and Controverſies, and make all our jarring Notes end in perfect Harmony, and (which is the main Thing I am inſiſting on) it will further us in the Practice of Chriſtianity, and afford us Time and Leiſure to apply ourſelves to Subſtantial Piety and Serious Godlineſs. The more we conform to the Pattern of Devotion preſcribed us in the Goſpel, and practiſed in the very firſt Times of Chriſtianity, ſo much the greater will be our Conformity to the Rules of Living well preſcribed in theſe Infallible Writings, and obſerved by thoſe Primitive Chriſtians. This we ſee exemplified in the Apoſtles Times, and in the immediately ſucceeding Ages. They were ſtrictly united in *their Worſhip*, as *Tertullian* acquaints us in the Beginning of his *Apologetick*, chap. 39. and *Juſtin Martyr* frequently atteſts the ſame; which mightily conduced to their Good Living. And ſo it would be with *Us*, if we would imitate thoſe Firſt Chriſtians, and agree to unite in all the Eſſentials of Worſhip in the publick Congregations, and think this ſufficient. For this would remove all the Antipathy of Party againſt Party, which is and ever hath been an Obſtacle to a Godly Life.

VI. The laſt and moſt ſucceſsful Way to advance the Reformation of Mens Manners is the *hearty Concurrence and Aſſiſtance of the Civil Powers.* It is obſervable that when the General Depravation and Wickedneſs of the World before the Flood is de-

deſcribed, this is given as one Reaſon of it, *There were Giants on the Earth in thoſe days*, Gen. vi. 4. that is, there were Men in Place and Authority, as * *Heſychius* and † *Chryſoſtom* interpret it, who were the grand Authors of the Impieties of thoſe Times. And after the Flood it is remarked that *Nimrod was a Mighty one on Earth*, Gen. x. 8. a Ruler, a Chief, who ſet the reſt on work to do all the Miſchief they could, and to erect the Tower of *Babel*, that they might fortify themſelves againſt any that oppoſed them, and live ſecurely in their Villanies. And ever ſince that Time this hath been the great Source of Immorality and Profaneneſs, of Impiety and all Licentiouſneſs, that thoſe in Authority have encouraged theſe Practices. On the other hand, Good and Vertuous Rulers have been by Divine Providence made the happy Inſtruments of promoting Religion and Vertuous Living in Kingdoms and Commonwealths. The Pious Princes among the *Jews*, as *David*, *Jehoſaphat*, *Joſiah*, *Hezekiah*, eſpouſed the Intereſt of the Church and Religion, and ſtudied how to promote Vertue and Piety among their Subjects. So did *Conſtantine the Great*, *Theodoſius*, and ſome other good Princes in the fourth and fifth Centuries of Chriſtianity. The Secular Arm aſſiſted *Luther* in the Reformation which he undertook of Doctrines and Manners. It is true, the very Firſt Ages of the Chriſtian Church had not this Advantage; yea, the Puiſſants and Higher Powers were their Perſecutors; but no other Uſage could be expected from them becauſe they were *Pagans*, and implacably ſet againſt the Chriſtian Religion: So that their Hatred of it, and their Perſecuting its Profeſſors, did rather Animate the Chriſtians, and unite them in Love, and in the Practice of all Chriſtian Duties. But now, when the Magiſtrates (as among us) are open Profeſſors

* Γίγας, Δυνάστης. † Γίγας, Τυτέστι Τύραννος.

of

of Chriſtianity, and profeſs to cheriſh and encourage it, their acting contrary to its holy Rules cannot but damp and diſcourage all Strictneſs of Manners.

Let it not ſeem ſtrange if I take the boldneſs to call to mind a *certain Time* which was remarkable for puniſhing prophane Swearers and Drunkards, and all open Debauchery, and for a ſtrict Obſervance of the Laws of Sobriety and Morality: the Reaſon of which was this, The Magiſtrates and Officers of Juſtice in all Parts of the Nation were generally free Themſelves from thoſe *Glaring Crimes*, and hated the Practice of them, and therefore puniſhed it in others. And ſhall we be aſhamed to Imitate what was Good and Commendable in thoſe Days? * Doth that which was Vertuous and Laudable in the Time of an Uſurper ceaſe to be ſo in the Reign of a Lawful Prince? Muſt we be Wild and Extravagant, becauſe thoſe People were outwardly Sober and Grave? I know we cry out of them as *Hypocrites*, and the worſt of that ſort: but give me their Sobriety and Outward Shew of Seriouſneſs and Religion (if we ſuppoſe nothing more), give me their ſevere Animadverting on Debauchery and Puniſhing of Profaneneſs; give me theſe, I ſay, rather than the Flagrant Impiety, Infidelity, Immorality and Atheiſm of this Age.

The Generality of Mankind are inclined to be Vitious and Diſorderly, and therefore the Almighty and Wiſe Governour of the World hath appointed Subordinate Governours on purpoſe to put a Check to this Inclination, and to hinder the miſchievous Effects of it: and this is their proper Work and peculiar Province. It is true, *GOD* only can change Mens Hearts, but the Tongues and Hands and outward Behaviour of Men are within the *Magiſtrate*'s Verge and Power, and he is to

* Fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri.

make

make uſe of this Power to curb and bridle the Vitious Manners of Men, and to cheriſh the Practice of Vertue. Thoſe then that are in Publick Office in the Commonwealth are the Proper Agents in the Work of *Reformation*, and it can never proſper where theſe are Remiſs and Negligent, much leſs where they are Haters of Vertue, and Practiſers of Vice. Royal Injunctions and Proclamations, and Acts of Parliament againſt Swearing and Curſing, and the like Enormities, will be uſeleſs unleſs ſuch Magiſtrates be in Place as abhor thoſe Vices. Yea, we had better have no Injunctions and Declarations againſt theſe Diſorders, if we take no care to obſerve them; for this doth but render the Royal Authority inſignificant and precarious. Her late Majeſty had a right Senſe of this when She told us that * *She would upon all occaſions diſtinguiſh Perſons of Piety and Vertue by Marks of her Royal Favour.* For She knew that thoſe only were fit to be advanced to Places of Truſt and Honour, who being vertuous themſelves, would ſtrive to make others ſo, and would ſhew their Zeal and Activity in ſtopping the Torrent of Vice that is broken out. How far She put this in execution, I ſhall not now enquire: but ſince an other Sovereign is advanced to the *Britiſh* Throne, we hope the Conſummating of this Great Work is reſerved for him.

Thus I have been Free and Bold in impartially ſetting before you the *Ways* which I conceive are moſt Proper for the *Reforming* of this Age. And at the ſame time I have let you ſee what are the *Impediments* that obſtruct this Good Work, namely, the *Want of Orthodox Principles*, the *Want of Warm and Lively Preaching*, *Diſorders in the Manners of thoſe that are to be Guides to others*, *Diſagreement in publick Worſhip*, the *Neglect of Church-Cenſures*, the *Negligence of ſome Civil Magiſtrates.* Give me leave

* The Queen's Proclamation, 1702.

now

now to urge and preſs the removing of theſe Impediments, and to exhort to the Practice and Performance of thoſe Rules and Methods I have laid down.

If we would have Religious and Godly Manners prevail among us in this Generation, let us in the firſt place look to our *Principles*. Far be it from me to inſinuate by what hath been ſaid that we ſhould employ our Time and Thoughts about mere Speculations and uſeleſs Controverſies in Divinity, as ſome would perſuade us thoſe forementioned Doctrines are, but without any Reaſon. I encourage no ſuch Vanity, I only defend thoſe foreſaid Truths ſo far as they are clearly delivered to us in the Holy Scriptures, and ſo far only as they relate to our neceſſary Belief, and our indiſpenſable Duty. I bar all nice Diſquiſitions, all Cenſorious dogmatizing, all raſh and uncharitable Determinations: In Leſſer Matters, and which admit of Diſpute, as I take leave my ſelf to diſſent from other Mens Notions, ſo I allow a juſt Liberty to them to differ from mine. I impoſe upon no Man's Belief or Practice in Things that are Dubious or Indifferent. I am willing to contribute towards the healing and reconciling of Differences, and I always think it our Duty to bear Good Will and Affection to thoſe whoſe Apprehenſions and Judgements comport not with ours.

But as for the *Doctrines themſelves*, we muſt believe and embrace them, becauſe they are Subſtantial and Weighty Truths; and the Reaſonings and Cavils which ſome Men make uſe of againſt them ſhew only that they take a great deal of Pains to pervert their Judgements, and to invent Arguments againſt undeniable Scripture, and the Will of God ſo plainly revealed there. We are not to Argue and Diſpute, nor need we fly to the Decrees and Canons of *Councils*, and the Deciſions of *Fathers*; we have no Occaſion to repair to *Augsbourg*, *Trent*, or *Dort*, we are not to appeal to *Luther* or *Calvin*;

for

for though theſe holy Men were raiſed up by God to diſcover and declare the Great Truths of the Chriſtian Religion and Worſhip, yet we are to remember that they had theſe Truths from the *Holy Scriptures*; and there is our Laſt Reſourſe. There we may ſee what is that *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, Jude ver. 4. *once* and no more, once by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and to be had only from them. We ought to conſult the Scriptures, and entertain no Doctrines but what theſe preſent us with, how Specious ſoever other Writings may ſeem to be. To the Infallible Writings we muſt keep cloſe, and thence inform ourſelves what the True Faith is, and more particularly with reſpect to thoſe Doctrines which I have above mentioned. Out of this Rich Treaſury the *Antient Chriſtians* took thoſe Glorious Truths, and delivered them to us.

And if we have any regard to our *Own Church*, her *Articles* and *Homilies* will tell us what her Senſe is about thoſe Doctrines. And theſe are the Truths which were preached and zealouſly defended by our Archbiſhops and Biſhops, and thoſe of our Clergy who have been celebrated for their Skill in Divine Matters, and univerſally voted to be Learned, Judicious, and Pious. Whatever their Notions were as to ſome Leſſer Points, this was their avowed Perſuaſion, this was the conſtant Strain and Tenour of their Writings. Sometimes we expreſs our high Value for theſe Famous Lights of our Church; let it be ſeen that now we do ſo. And I muſt add, that theſe Excellent Perſons thought theſe Doctrines to be the neceſſary Barriers againſt *Popery* ſince the Reformation; yea, the contrary Doctrines were rejected by them as *Popiſh*.

And this reminds me to ſay ſomething here with reſpect to thoſe Points which are confeſſed by all to be the Doctrines and Articles of the *Church of Rome*; and it is high time to warn you againſt the Em-

Embracing of Theſe, ſeeing ſome among us begin already to approve of them, and publickly to defend them. I could name ſome Perſons who contend for the *Real and Corporal Preſence of Chriſt's Body* in the Sacrament, for the *Neceſſity of Prieſtly Abſolution* in order to the Remiſſion of Sins, without which they tell us Converſion and Repentance ſignify nothing. They publickly declare that there are *Proper Prieſts*, *Altars*, and a *Sacrifice* under the Goſpel, which is as much as to ſay, the Sacrifice of the Maſs. An other of our Divines (who mightily influences the reſt) pleads for *Chriſm* in *Confirmation*, *Anointing the Sick with Oyl*, *Confeſſion*, and *Sacerdotal Abſolution* as *Judicial*, *Praying for the Souls of the Dead*, *the Commemoration of the deceaſed Saints in the Euchariſt*. *Theſe are wanting in the Reformed Churches*, * he ſaith. And that the Reformation from Popery is a great Mortification to theſe Men is plain from what he adds, *Primitive Practice continued more or leſs corrected in all Churches 'till the Reformation.* O this Vile and Wicked *Reformation* that hath robbed us of Prayers for the Souls of the dead, and of the Sacrifice of the Maſs, and all thoſe other Bleſſed Things before mentioned! We have not heard of any of theſe Doctrines among us ſince the Popiſh Queen *Mary*'s Reign, unleſs it were for a time in a certain Archbiſhop's days: but *now* they are revived and come abroad again, and are openly vouched by ſome of our Clergy. It behoves us then to be upon our guard, to maintain the Doctrines of the *Proteſtant Reformed Religion*, as they are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the *Roman Church*. And more Generally, it is our Duty and Concern to aſſert and uphold all the Principles of the Chriſtian Religion, as they are contained in the Scriptures of the New Teſtament; for (as I have ſhewed before) the great Cauſe of the Licentiouſ-

* Dr. *Hickes*: Preface before his Account of Dr. *Grabe*'s MSS.

neſs

neſs of our Manners is, our Deviating from this Infallible Standard of Truth and Holy Living.

Again, Care ſhould be taken that the Sound Principles of our Religion and the Duties of it be delivered with great Plainneſs and a becoming Warmth and Vigour. We in *England* have more Sermons preached to us than any Nation in the World, and yet the Succeſs doth not anſwer to it; one Reaſon whereof is becauſe it is oftentimes done in ſo lifeleſs a manner. Go into any other Nation either Proteſtant or Popiſh, and you will not find ſuch Coldneſs and Indifferency in their Pulpits as is found in many Places among us: and the Effect of it among them is that thoſe who hear theſe Diſcourſes are generally more concerned for their Religion (ſuch as they have been bred up in) than we are. I hope it will not be ill taken by my Brethren if I remind them to ſhew themſelves as Zealous as others in ſo Important a Cauſe. We live in an Age wherein Truth is Heterodox, and Strictneſs of Life a Fault: wherefore we had need to be *very Earneſt* and *Vigorous* in our Applications to our Charge, when we are preſſing on them the Principles of our Faith, and the Neceſſity of Living according to them. Here we cannot be too Warm and Zealous.

In the next place, as Preachers muſt be earneſt with others to live according to the Excellent Rule which is ſet before them, ſo they muſt practiſe this Themſelves. As *they have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord*, ſo *they are to walk in him*, Col. ii. 6. as they have embraced the Doctrine of Chriſt, and have the Honour to preach it, ſo their Lives and Actions ought to be agreeable to that Doctrine. I hope I need not enlarge on this Head to my Brethren in the Sacred Function, for they cannot but be very Senſible of their indiſpenſable Duty in this Matter.

Nor need I inſiſt on the Neceſſity of excluding profane and diſſolute Livers from the Communion

of

of our Church, which was an other Help towards the Reformation of Mens Manners that I mentioned. I will ſay this only, if we would make an Experiment, and actually put this Diſcipline in practice, I believe we ſhould in a ſhort time be convinced of the good Effects of it in the Change which we ſhould ſee in Mens Lives.

An other Thing I would here inculcate, in order to a Catholick Reformation is, that Care might be taken that we all perfectly Agree in the Worſhip of God. It is well known and plainly felt that there are Shameful and Scandalous Diviſions and Diſtractions in Chriſtendom, which I verily think have in a great meaſure their Riſe and Spring from that Diſagreement which is in the Publick Devotions. For this is certain, that an Union among Chriſtians muſt be founded on their Union with God, on their being united in their Religious Converſe and Communion. We cannot join with the *Papiſts*, becauſe their Worſhip is ſuperſtitious and idolatrous; and there are even *Proteſtants* who refuſe to join with one another becauſe there is a difference between them as to the Manner and Circumſtances of Publick Prayer and adminiſtering the Sacraments, *&c.* whereas any Wiſe and Peaceable Man may decide the Controverſy, and put an end to all Differences by ſuggeſting that the Worſhip of God in the Congregations of Chriſtians ought to be regulated and eſtabliſhed by what *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* commanded and practiſed. We are to fix our Eyes and Thoughts on thoſe Firſt and Pureſt Times, and not on the Ages which were afterwards Corrupted. This one Thing alone would ſet all Churches right as to their Publick Devotion, and they would never more diſpute about Forms or No Forms. For no Man can find fault with that way of Worſhip, which contains nothing in it but what the Word of God and the Simplicity of Chriſtianity require. And this Solid Union and

Peace in the Church would ſoon produce an Happy Alteration in Mens Manners. The Agreement in Devotion would inſpire them with Peace, and mutual Love and Charity, and theſe excellent Qualities would be attended with an entire Love to God, and we ſhould be brought under the Power of the True Chriſtian Spirit, and have our Hearts and Lives perfectly changed.

There is but one Thing behind to be mentioned again, and to be preſſed as an Effectual Way to Reform this Nation; and that is the proper Work of the *Civil Magiſtrate.* If theſe Papers ſhall fall into the Hands of any of that Rank and Station, I earneſtly intreat them to promote the Great and Noble Deſign which I have been inſiſting on by their own Example and Practice. By this let them diſcourage all Vice, Prophaneneſs and Immorality in others, and do what they can to ſet forward an Univerſal Reformation, a Thorough Change in the whole Community, leſt ſome ſhould be tempted to wiſh for their *Hypocrites* again.

And thus I have Recapitulated all that I offered to you before, and have endeavoured to make you ſenſible of the abſolute Neceſſity of it. It muſt be ſuch *Principles*, ſuch *Preaching*, ſuch *Living*, ſuch *Diſcipline*, ſuch *Agreement in Devotion*, ſuch *Magiſtrates* as I have ſpoken of, that will be able to procure that *Reformation* which is wiſhed for by all Good Men. It is my Perſuaſion that nothing will be done to purpoſe in this great and important Deſign without the Uſe of theſe Methods. Religion and Vertue will never flouriſh 'till Theſe be obſerved, and that with great Care and Sedulity. All other Expedients or Projective Maxims and Endeavours will prove fruitleſs and inſignificant.

I will now, in the Cloſe of all, add ſome proper *Motives* and *Inducements* to enforce the Practice of all that I have ſaid. Many might be made uſe of, but I will mention only Two. The Firſt more im-

immediately reſpects *ourſelves*; the Second thoſe that are *Without*. The Firſt Motive or Argument is the Advantage of *Reformation* to ourſelves. Nothing but Religion can ſecure us: nothing but the ſincere Practice of it can derive Bleſſings upon us. They are the Righteous that are the Inſtruments of Good and Welfare to a Nation. Theſe are the beſt *Palladium* to preſerve a Kingdom, they are the ſureſt Patrons and Defenders of the Community. Theſe are the Props and Buttreſſes of a Nation; they keep it from ſinking and falling into Ruin. Theſe are our Shields and Bucklers; they defend and protect us from Danger and Perdition. Whilſt Upright and Godly Men ſurvive, Judgements are oftentimes witheld from the Publick: but when they are removed, one may without the Spirit of Prophecy foretell that Dreadful Calamities will enſue. When *Noah* was taken into the Ark, the Deluge broke in upon the Old World. When *Lot* was removed out of *Sodom*, a Flood of Fire and Brimſtone deſtroyed the City. When *Joſeph* was dead, the whole Land of *Egypt*, eſpecially the *Iſraelites*, had cauſe to Lament. The Reaſon is becauſe thoſe that truly fear God are by their Prayers and Tears, by their prudent Advice and Admonitions, by their Exemplary Holineſs, and by the Bleſſing of God upon all theſe, Beneficial to the Places they live in. I impute it to this in a great meaſure that *We* of this Nation are ſpared, notwithſtanding the vaſt Number of Bold Sinners among us. I hope we all fare the better for this Choſen Generation. It is for Their ſake that we are yet a People. *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left unto us this ſmall Remnant, we ſhould have been as Sodom, and we ſhould have been like unto Gomorrah*, Iſai. i. 9. But when theſe Lights of the World are put out, then look for nothing but Blackneſs and Darkneſs, and a diſmal Night of Calamity. When this Salt of the Earth ſhall be trodden underfoot,

promiſe yourſelves nothing but general Corruption and Putrefaction. When you ſee theſe Pillars pulled down, when this *Stay* and this *Staff* are broken, then expect a Downfall and utter Ruin. Wherefore while theſe Good and Righteous Perſons, who are the beſt Friends to a Kingdom, are amongſt us, we ought to have a great Reſpect and Regard for them. Make much of them in ſuch an Age as this; eſteem and honour their Perſons, highly value their Prayers, earneſtly crave their Advice, advantage yourſelves by their Company and Converſation, be improved by their Graces and Examples. Grieve them not, nor by your Affronts and Ill Uſage cauſe them to complain of you to Heaven. Pray for their Continuance among you, and beg that they may be skreened from the Fury and Violence of the Wicked: and pray and endeavour to be of the number of thoſe Excellent Perſons, that you may be Inſtrumental in deriving a Bleſſing on the Publick.

The *Second Motive* is the Advantage which even thoſe who are *out of the Church* may reap by our Reformation. We ſhall hereby be fit to propagate the Chriſtian Religion among Foreigners, and by that means happily enlarge the Church of Chriſt. There are great numbers of our Nation continually travelling into Other Countries, and traficking with the Inhabitants of thoſe Places; beſides that ſome from thoſe Foreign Countries come and traffick with us at home, ſo that our *Converſation* and *Manners* are not unknown to them. Wherefore we ſhould take heed that theſe be ſuch as become Perſons who profeſs Chriſtianity, leſt Chriſtianity itſelf be diſgraced. In our *Plantations* abroad and in other different Countries we hold Commerce with *Pagans*, and therefore we ſhould not by our Immoral and Vitious Behaviour prejudice the Propagation of the Chriſtian Religion among them; but on the contrary by the Innocency and Integrity of our Actions we ought

to

to further their Converſion, and win them to the Embracing of our Holy Religion; eſpecially when we conſider the vaſt Number of Heathens in the whole inhabited Earth that remain yet in their Infidelity; for according to the beſt Computation they are thrice as many more than *Chriſtians* of what Denomination ſoever.

So for *Jews*, they cannot but think that our Immorality is a Reproach to our Religion, and without doubt our Diſſolute Lives are juſtly a Scandal to them: for we own that the Firſt Chriſtians threw of the *Jewiſh* Religion to embrace that of Chriſt, becauſe this is more ſpiritual and refined, more pure and exact, and gives ſtricter Rules of Holineſs: and therefore the Converſion and Reſtauration of that People (which we look for in due time, becauſe it is predicted) muſt needs be retarded by our Diſorderly Practices, when they ſee the vaſt difference between the Laws of Chriſt and the Lives of Chriſtians.

And can we think that we do not hinder the Reception of Chriſtianity among thoſe of the *Mahometan* Perſuaſion by our Unchriſtian Behaviour? The Evil Manners of the *Chriſtians* in the *Eaſt* gave the firſt Riſe to this Sect: and ſince that time the ſame Cauſe hath had an Effect of the like nature; that is, it hath confirmed that People in a good Opinion of their Impoſture. The *Turk* reverences his *Alcoran:* but we ſee that thouſands among us *Chriſtians* deſpiſe the *Bible.* Prophane Swearing and Curſing and Drunkenneſs are abhorred by the *Turks*, but they behold *Chriſtians* conſtantly indulging themſelves in thoſe abominable Vices. This hath a direct Tendency to the defaming and reproaching our Religion, and to the hindering the Diſciples of *Mahomet* from having an Eſteem for it.

Then as to *Papiſts*, I'm afraid our Debauched Manners are a great Impediment to their hearkening to us when we invite them to come into our

Communion, and to relinquiſh that of *Rome*. For they may juſtly expect that *we* ſhould be more Strict than *they* are, ſeeing we have ſeparated from them becauſe of their Corruptions, both with regard to their Lives and to their Doctrines. We ſhould remember that we profeſs ourſelves to be of a *Reformed Church*, and conſequently our Manners ſhould be reformed as well as our Opinions. Prophaneneſs and Immorality in a *Proteſtant* are Intolerable. I wiſh This be not one occaſion of the daily Defections of Perſons from the Reformed Religion in the Churches abroad.

Laſtly, with reſpect to all Perſons and Countries whatſoever, let it be conſidered that our Irregular Lives and Lewd Examples are a great Obſtacle to the Advancement of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Enlargement of the Kingdom of Chriſt upon Earth, and harden Men in their Sins.

If a True Chriſtian Spirit and Genius inſpire us, we ſhall ſeriouſly think of theſe Things, and act accordingly; eſpecially when we conſider that it is expected that we ſhould behave ourſelves anſwerably to the Bleſſing of *PEACE* which is at preſent vouchſafed to us, and which we had ſo impatiently longed for. It is the *Reformation* which I have been ſpeaking of that will render our Peace a Real and Laſting Bleſſing by teaching us how to uſe it well. To which purpoſe it is obſervable that theſe Two, *Peace* and *Righteouſneſs* or *Holineſs* are joined together by the Holy Ghoſt in the * Inſpired Writings, becauſe the Fruits and Effects of them ought to be Reciprocal, and they ſhould promote and advance one another. Wherefore it is our Concern to forward this mutual Advancement; for there is nothing now in our Power that

* Pſal. lxxii. 3. lxxxv. 10. Iſai. xxxii. 17. liv. 13, 14. lx. 17. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Heb. xii. 14. Jam. iii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

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can ſecure and perpetuate to us the Bleſſing of *Peace* but our Univerſal Practice of Religion. We ſhould do well to remember that though at preſent we are freed from the Calamity of War, yet we may expect the Return of that or ſome other Judgements if we perſevere in our vitious and ungodly Practices. When we imagine that the Treaſury of Divine Wrath is quite exhauſted, we ſhall find that there are more Ways of Severity to curb audacious Sinners. We may ſee the Black Clouds, which heretofore did hang over our Heads, gather again, and fall down upon us and cruſh us: we may by fatal Experience know that our Plagues are multiplied and increaſed, that they are more in kind, or greater in degree.

Knowing therefore the Terrour of the Lord, we perſuade you, we beſeech and intreat you ſo to order your Converſation that you may prevent theſe Evils which you are threatened with. Which can no otherwiſe be done than by the obſerving of thoſe Inſtructions which I have before ſuggeſted to you. They are the beſt that I am able to give you. It is *your* Part now to attend to them, to ſet about the practiſing of them, and to pray moſt ardently that God would make your Endeavours effectual and ſucceſsful.

I have but one Word to add, and that is this; Having by the Divine Providence obtained Peace *abroad*, let it be our care to preſerve it *at home*. When our Foreign Foes are laid aſleep, let us not turn our Weapons upon one another; but let it be our great Work to maintain a perfect Tranquillity among Ourſelves. Let us extirpate every Root of Bitterneſs, Wrath and Diſſention, leſt otherwiſe we bring that Miſchief upon ourſelves by our mutual Animoſities and Uncharitable Differences which our Adverſaries deſigned againſt us by their Open Hoſtilities. Our Philoſophers tell us that were it not for the Natural Principle of *Gravitation*, all the

World would preſently fly in pieces, and nothing either in the Heavens or in the Earth would keep its Place: it being This that preſerves them in their due Stations, and makes them regular and uſeful. Now, what *Gravitation* is in Natural Bodies, that *PEACE* and *UNION* is in Civil and Eccleſiaſtical ones. It is This that hinders their Diſſolution and prevents their Diſtraction: it is This that holds them together, and keeps them in good Order. May we by happy Experience find This to be the Effect of our Unity and Concord, eſpecially in the Church and in Religious Affairs; that thereby Impiety, Superſtition and Falſe Worſhip may be diſcountenanced, that the Idols of the *Philiſtines* may fall proſtrate before the Ark, that we may have Apoſtolical Times again, and ſee the truly Primitive Age reſtored. Which that it may be the Bleſſing of Our Days, ought to be the ſincere Wiſh and fervent Prayer of all Lovers of the Church of Chriſt and True Godlineſs.

A RESOLUTION OF THIS QUERY,

WHETHER

The Doctrine of *Non-Reſiſtance* and *Paſſive Obedience* is to be underſtood without any *Limitation* and *Reſtriction.*



LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR M.DCC.XXX.

RESOLUTION

OF THIS

QUERY,

WHETHER

The Doctrine of Non-Resistance and Passive Obedience is to be understood without any Limitation and Restriction.



LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXXX.



A RESOLUTION OF THIS QUERY,

WHETHER

The Doctrine of NON-RESISTANCE and PASSIVE-OBEDIENCE are to be understood without any *Limitation* or *Restriction.*

THE Question propounded is about the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of *Obeying* or *Resisting* of Crowned Heads: and I will beg leave to offer my Thoughts freely on this Subject, especially seeing the Doctrines of *Obedience* and *Resistance* have been strangely abused and perverted, and that in a very different manner. For some have very low and mean Apprehensions of Authority and Magistracy, and particularly of the Office of a King. Yea, they

they abhor that very Form of Government, and vote it to be *in Itſelf* Evil, which they would infer from what *Samuel* ſaith of *Kings*, 1 Sam. viii. 11. But they ſhould conſider that long before this, God had promiſed the *Iſraelites* that they ſhould have a *King*, Deut. xvii. 14, 15. and therefore God was not angry with them becauſe they asked a King, but becauſe they did it in a diſcontented and mutinous way, and becauſe they would have a King out of Contempt of *Samuel* their preſent Governour, and even out of Contempt of *God himſelf* who was their *King*. Wherefore we cannot abſolutely gather from this Paſſage in the Sacred Hiſtory that this particular Polity of Kingſhip is in itſelf unlawful. We know that the Divine Bleſſing accompanied this Government in the Reigns of *David*, *Solomon*, *Jehoſaphat*, *Joſiah*, *Hezekiah*, and other Kings in the ſucceeding Times of Chriſtianity, according to that Promiſe to the Church under the Goſpel, that *Kings ſhould be its Nurſing Fathers, and Queens its Nurſing Mothers*, Iſai. xlix. 23. Therefore thoſe are to be condemned who deſpiſe Crowned Heads, affront their Perſons, vilify their Power, reproach their Dignity, reject their Laws, reſiſt and oppoſe their Government. Theſe, I ſay, are utterly to be condemned; though we are not to wonder at this Practice of theirs, becauſe every one is naturally a *Libertine*, and would do what he pleaſes. To be Reſtrained is hard and irkſome, and it is thought a Slaviſh Thing to be Governed, and that by one Single Man. This is one *Extreme* of the Doctrine I am to diſcourſe of.

An other, on the other hand, is this, that the Power and Commands of Kings are not to be diſputed in the leaſt; that the Obedience which is due to them ought to be without any *Reſerve*, and that no Reſiſtance whatever is to be tolerated. There are thoſe that not only call them *Gods* (for which they have leave from Scripture) but behave themſelves

ſelves towards them as if they were Real Deities. This was the Antient and Firſt *Idolatry* of the World, to *worſhip Kings*, and this Idolizing of Kings remains to this day. We have thoſe that *deify* the Supreme Powers, yea, exalt them above God himſelf. Abſolute Sovereignty is that *Golden Image* which Kings and Emperors ſet up, and command *all Tongues, Languages and People to fall down to and worſhip.* And we ſee many of them do ſo, *the mean Man boweth down, and the great Man humbleth himſelf.* And they would perſuade us that *this is the Image which fell down from Jupiter*, it is from God himſelf, and by Divine and Heavenly Right. Becauſe *Monarchy* prevailed generally *at firſt* among the Nations, ſome thence argue for its Divine Original: but they may as well plead the *Jus Divinum* of *Idolatry*, for that obtained in the earlieſt Times among the Nations. Notwithſtanding this, they are ſtrongly inclined to idolize Monarchs, and a Single Government: Nothing elſe will ſerve, no leſs than this will content theſe Men. No Form of Ruling is to be allowed of but this, though we are told by the Apoſtle that *All Power is of God*, Commonwealths and all other Forms of Government, as well as Kingſhip, are *of God:* and there is no Particular Model or Frame of Government inſtituted by God, ſo as to exclude any other. But our Adorers of Kings go higher, and tell us that a King can be guilty of no *Fault*, or if there be any ſuch Thing, he is Accountable to no Man for it; and if he perſiſts in it even to the utmoſt Detriment of his People, he muſt not be checked; there muſt be no *Oppoſition* made againſt him on any account whatſoever, he muſt be let alone to act as he pleaſes.

Theſe are the *Extremes* of the Doctrine of the Obedience to *Rulers:* but the latter of them of late hath been moſt controverted, and therefore I ſhall apply myſelf to the handling of that, and

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ſhew that the Doctrine of *Obedience* and *Non-Reſiſtance* ought to be *Qualified*, and is not to be embraced in the Groſs, and without Reſtriction. It is a True Propoſition that *Kings muſt not be reſiſted*, and yet it is equally True that *they may and ought to be reſiſted.* This is reconciled by ſhewing *in what Caſes* it may be lawful to make Reſiſtance againſt them, and *in what not.* This I briefly compriſe in theſe two Heads: they ought not to be Reſiſted unleſs they *ſubvert our Religion*, and unleſs they *deſtroy the Fundamental Laws* of our *Secular Conſtitution.* In Matters of an other and leſſer Nature our Religion bids us comport with the Commands of our Superiours, though they croſs our private Inclinations and Intereſts. We muſt, rather than be guilty of Sturdy Oppoſition, ſubmit to ſome hard Uſage, and undergo the Task laid upon us, and overcome Evil with Good. Yea, we muſt Patiently and Contentedly ſuffer, and think it our Duty to do ſo. But,

Firſt, I ſay, if *Religion* be concerned, then the Caſe is altered. We muſt by no means ſuffer our Superiours to rob us of our *Religion*, which is our Beſt and Greateſt Charter. If any Thing be worth fighting for, Religion certainly is, what ever ſome have fancied to the contrary; for this is our Deareſt and Chiefeſt Treaſure, our Glory, our Joy, our Crown, and therefore we are obliged *to hold this faſt, and let no Man*, no not our Leige Lord and King, *take this Crown from us.* Heretofore in *Poland* at the rehearſing of the Creed the Nobles uſed to draw their Swords, ſignifying that they were ready to defend the Faith with their very Blood. We may further conſider that ſince the *Chriſtian Religion* hath been owned by the Civil Powers, it is become one of our *Civil Priviledges* and *Emoluments.* This eſtabliſhing of it is Part of the National Intereſt, and therefore we ought to aſſert and defend it as ſuch. There is among us a

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National Settlement of the Chriſtian Doctrine and Worſhip; the Laws of our Land have given Vertue and Authority to our Religion, and the Breach of it is puniſhable by the ſame Laws, which ſhews it to be made a kind of Civil Right by our Laws, and that there is no doubt but it may be maintained and vindicated as other Civil Rights, Liberties and Properties. The *Church* now is in the *Empire*; the Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution is involved in that of the Kingdom, and conſequently if we may reſiſt thoſe who would ſhock the Civil Government (as I ſhall prove under the next Head), we may lawfully oppoſe thoſe that deſign the Ruin of the *Church*. Beſides, it is Rational to think that God hath not denied us the Liberty to make Oppoſition againſt *them* who openly oppoſe *Him*. If *the Higher Powers were ordained of God* (as the Apoſtle aſſures us), it is certain that they are not empowered to act *againſt God*, or, which is the ſame thing, *againſt Religion*: for God gives not Power againſt himſelf, nor a Right and Commiſſion to break his Laws. We may ſafely then in the Cauſe of God and of Religion, and in Defence of the Chriſtian Faith, make reſiſtance againſt him who endeavours to extirpate that Faith, to change that Religion, and to fight with God himſelf. This without doubt authorizes a *Proteſtant* Nation to dethrone a Prince who ſtrives to introduce the *Popiſh Religion*, and to impoſe it by force upon his Subjects.

Secondly, Kings may lawfully be reſiſted when they ſubvert and deſtroy the very *Foundations of the Secular Conſtitution*, and *deſign the Deſtruction of the People* as to their Temporal Intereſt, their Lives, their Eſtates, their Liberties; for theſe next to *Religion* are moſt precious. It is a certain Maxim, that Kings and Rulers were made for the Safety of the People. The End of Government is the Welfare of the Community. The Kings Intereſt muſt not be ſeparated from that of the People, nor ſet

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up in oppoſition to it. When the Contrary is purſued by the Prince, it is too plain that he deſigns their Ruin: and by doing ſo he diſclaims and abdicates the Regal Power and Government, he willfully depoſes and dethrones himſelf, for he deſignedly doth thoſe Things which are inconſiſtent with his Royal Character. This we have from the Mouth of one who was famed for his *King-craft*, and was as tenacious of his Royal Prerogative as any Prince ever was, * *A King governing in a ſettled Kingdom*, ſaith he, *leaves to be a King, and degenerates into a Tyrant as ſoon as he leaves off to rule according to his Laws.* And the Reaſon is plain; for he is a King by Law, and therefore if he deſtroys the Law, and this he doth if he deſtroys his People, he is no longer King. Conſequently to *reſiſt* ſuch a one can't be Unlawful, ſeeing whatever is Unlawful is againſt the Law: but reſiſting in the Caſe I am now ſpeaking of is not againſt the Law, becauſe the Law is maintained and upheld, and its Virtue and Authority kept up by ſuch a Reſiſtance. Nothing is more certain than this, that the Prince's Right and Authority ariſe from the Law which inveſts him with that Right and Authority: but the Law never authoriſes him to deſtroy his Subjects and ruin his People, and therefore they may lawfully hinder him from effecting this. If you will call this *Rebellion*, then Rebellion is no other than this, A hindering the Ruler from doing all the Miſchief he would, it is a not ſuffering him to deſtroy us: and conſequently *Rebellion* (if you muſt needs give it that Name) is a very Innocent and Lawful Thing, and ſuch as Self-Preſervation and the Love of Religion and of the Laws require of us. Indeed there is no need of any Expreſs Law for this: For would we not look upon it as a

* King *James* the Iſt's Speech to his Parliament.

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ridiculous and abſurd Thing to ask a Man what Warrant he hath to eat and drink to preſerve his Life, and to conſult his Health and Safety? So equally abſurd is it to demand of us what Order or Warrant we have, as we are in a Civil Society, to take care of our Welfare, and to procure our own Preſervation, and to defend ourſelves from Injuries. The Law of Nature bids us do this, and we are ſure that there is no Law of God to make it void, for this Natural Law is from God himſelf. What a wild Notion is this, that the Prince hath a Right to deſtroy his People, but they have no Right to defend themſelves from Deſtruction in ſuch a caſe? One ſingle Man hath Liberty given him to ruin a whole Nation, and they are obliged in Conſcience to ſit ſtill, and not to help themſelves. Surely this is one of the broadeſt Signs of the beſotted Nature of theſe Men. And thus I have in few Words ſhewed how the Doctrine of *Non-Reſiſtance* is to be *qualified*, and what *Exceptions* and *Limitations* appertain to it.

But it will be Juſt and Fair to attend to what is alledged to the Contrary, that ſo we may give our Adverſaries ſome Satisfaction as to their Allegations, or at leaſt that we may ourſelves be more confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the Belief of what I have offered. Firſt, that Commandment in the Decalogue is urged, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, i. e. thy Civil Parents, thy Rulers and Governours, and more particularly Kings and Princes; which is the ſame with the Apoſtle's Injunction, *Let every Soul be ſubject to the Higher Powers*, Rom. xiii. 1. and therefore all Reſiſtance is unlawful, for *Honouring* and *being Subject* are inconſiſtent with *Reſiſtance*. The plain Anſwer is, that neither of theſe Precepts are to be underſtood without Reſtriction, though this Reſtriction be not expreſſed. For our Reaſon will tell us that theſe Precepts, and the Prohibitions (*viz.* of *Reſiſtance*) contained

in them, are to be interpreted as ſome *others* are. Thus when it is ſaid in the fourth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt do no manner of Work*, it is granted by all Expoſitors that Works of *Neceſſity* and *Mercy* are excepted, though not expreſſed; ſurely then it may with as great reaſon be granted, that in the fifth Commandment which requires honouring and Obeying our Civil Parents, *i. e.* Princes and Rulers, the *Neceſſity* of Reſiſtance in ſome Caſes (where likewiſe it is an Act of Mercy to thoſe that are oppreſſed) may be allowed as an *Exception*, though it is not mentioned. *Swear not at all*, ſaith our Saviour *Mat.* v. 24. St. *James* enjoins the ſame, Chap. v. yet there is a Lawful Swearing, as all Divines hold. So the General Prohibition of *Reſiſting* the Higher Powers is not to be underſtood without ſome Limitation, as will farther appear when I come to conſider the moſt remarkable Paſſages in the 13th Chapter to the *Romans*.

That Text is made uſe of, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 5, 6. *David's Heart ſmote him becauſe he had cut off Saul's Skirt: and he ſaid, the Lord forbid that I ſhould do this Thing unto my Maſter the Lord's Anointed, to ſtretch forth my hand againſt him, ſeeing he is the Anointed of the Lord.* But hence we can only infer that at *that Time* and in that *particular Juncture David* was diſſatisfied with what he had done in that Secret and Clancular Way againſt *Saul*, which looked as diſhonourable: and beſides, when he conſidered that *Saul* was *the Anointed of the Lord*, *i. e.* ſet up and appointed by him, there was a juſt Regret upon his Mind for Inſulting his Perſon in that unfair manner: But this makes nothing againſt *Reſiſtance*, for we read that *David* when he was purſued by *Saul* levied Forces, kept ſtrong Holds, and defended himſelf by Arms, and refuſed to ſurrender himſelf and his Soldiers to *Saul* and his Officers. This was plain *Reſiſtance*. And we read that *David* and his Company forcibly reſcued *Jonathan*,

Jonathan, to prevent *Saul*'s Execution of his barbarous Intention to put him to death.

It is ſaid that thoſe Words *By me Kings reign*, *Prov.* viii. 15. ſpeak of the Irreſiſtible Authority of Kings; for it appears from this Text, that all Kings whether good or bad reign by God's Allowance and Approbation, and therefore are not to be reſiſted. But this evidently contradicts that Text *Hoſ.* viii. 4. *They have ſet up Kings, but not by me*, they have done it of their own heads, without any Leave from me; and (as it follows) *they have made Princes, and I knew it not*, that is, I approved not of it. *Jereboam* and thoſe that followed afterwards in the Throne came not to it by vertue of the Promiſe made to *David*, they either ſet themſelves up, or were ſet up by the worſt Men. We ſee then that no Advantage accrues to the Cauſe which the extravagant Worſhippers of Kings maintain by alledging that Text in the *Proverbs*. Beſides, they wholly miſtake the Meaning of the Wiſe Man in that Place; for when he ſaith, *By me Kings reign*, he not only in general aſſerts the Authority and Power of Kings and all other Rulers to be an Ordinance of God, but more particularly and ſpecially he lets us know that it is by *Wiſdom* (for She is brought in ſpeaking theſe and other Words in that Chapter) that Kings and all other Rulers are enabled to govern Wiſely and Juſtly, as we may ſee plainly from the Connection, *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice*, that is, adminiſter the Publick Affairs in that Righteous manner which is required of them. There is no occaſion then to *Reſiſt* ſuch Rulers. Further, I would have it obſerved how impertinently this Text hath been made uſe of to authorize Abſolute and Unlimited Obedience to Kings, whatever their Carriage be towards their Subjects; for it is not only ſaid here, *By me Kings reign*, and *Princes rule*, but *Nobles and all the Judges of the Earth*, that is,

ſubordinate and inferiour Magiſtrates, Officers and Miniſters of Crowned Heads, who according to the declared Judgement of the greateſt Patrons of *Abſolute Non-Reſiſtance*, may be called to an Account; and if they have been exorbitant in their Actions, may lawfully be Reſiſted.

Nor is that Text in *Prov.* xxx. 31. *A King againſt whom there is no riſing up*, which is conſtantly produced and urged by the Aſſerters of the Irreſiſtible Power of Kings, at all to the purpoſe. *Solomon* tells us here that *there are three Things that go well, yea, four are comely in going, a Lion, a Grey-hound, a He Goat, and a King.* Theſe all have a ſtately Gate and Mien, eſpecially the laſt of them, he being of great Power and Authority. Perſons of that Royal Character are of great Force and Strength, and therefore *againſt them there is no riſing up* without manifeſt Danger. But this Text doth not tell us that it is Unlawful *to riſe up againſt him*, if he be unſufferably Wicked and Profligate, and deſigns the Overthrow of Religion and the Laws. But there is an other Interpretation which may be given of the Word * *Alkum* which is here uſed, it may well be tranſlated *who riſes not up*, namely, againſt his People. This is a *Comely* Sight indeed, to ſee a King not inſulting his Subjects, not exerciſing Tyrannical Sway over them. And this agrees with what a † Learned Writer, well skilled in the Eaſtern Languages, thinks to be the true rendering of this and the following Word in that Text, *a King with his People.* Yes indeed, this is the True *King Alkum*, and a Fair Sight he is, as the Wiſe Man notes, he *goes well*, he *is comely in going*, and againſt ſuch there is no Riſing up.

Solomon is alledged again, in *Eccl.* viii. 4. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power, and who may ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* But he that can prove

* Ab *al* non, & *kum* ſurgere. † Dr. *Pocock* in loc.

hence

hence the Unlawfulneſs of contradicting and oppoſing Kings when they intend the Ruin of their People, may prove what he pleaſes from any Words in the Scripture. For the Deſign of this Place and the Words preceeding is to urge Obedience to Kings, and particularly to enforce it from the Conſideration of their Great Power. He that thinks of this will not raſhly and imprudently make Oppoſition againſt them, leſt he be cruſhed by them. So that theſe Words (as a great many more in this Book, and in that of the *Proverbs*) are but Suggeſtions of Prudential Behaviour and Policy, for the Outward Tranquillity of Man's Life. Obſerve therefore that in the Original it is not [Who *may ſay* unto him, What doeſt thou?] as we render it, but [Who * *will ſay* unto him theſe Words?] that is, we ſhall find few that are ſo bold and daring as to behave themſelves with this Freedom and Courage, and to tell Princes of their Faults; and if they be deſtructive to the Community, whether in reſpect of Religion or Secular Rights, to endeavour to hinder the miſchievous Effects of them by Violence and Hoſtility. But this doth not prove that this Endeavour is unlawful, but it rather implies that People ſhould take Courage to do it. Which ſeems to be ſuppoſed in thoſe Words of this Wiſe Man in *Prov.* xvii. 26. *It is not good to ſtrike Princes for Equity*; as much as to hint that they may be ſtricken for *Iniquity*, they may be Reſtrained when by Unjuſt and Oppreſſive Methods they gall their poor Subjects.

But the Text on which the extravagant Admirers of Kings, and of all that they do, lay the greateſt Streſs is *Rom.* xiii. 2. *Whoſoever reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God, and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves Damnation.* Therefore, ſay they, Kings muſt not be reſiſted in any

* *Jomar*, dicet,

Caſe whatſoever. We are to ſit ſtill and tame, and ſuffer them to trample upon us, and to do what Miſchief they pleaſe: and if any dare to do otherwiſe, they are certainly *damned.* This is the frightful Doctrine which they preach from theſe Words of the Apoſtle, but there is no Foundation at all in the Words for it. For it cannot but be confeſſed that St. *Paul* here and in this Chapter ſpeaks of ſuch Kings and Rulers as are not only Lawful Powers, but act Lawfully. He ſpeaks of ſuch as *are not a Terrour to good Works, but to the Evil*, ver. 3. Such as are *Miniſters of God to us for Good*, ver. 4. Such as are *Revengers to execute Wrath upon thoſe that do Evil*, ver. 4. Such as are *God's Miniſters attending continually on this very Thing*, ver. 6. that is, on the rewarding of thoſe that are good, and puniſhing the Evil. This is the Character which the Apoſtle gives of the *Higher Powers* to whom he bids *every Soul be ſubject*, and *not reſiſt*: and therefore it is Irrational and Abſurd to apply the foreſaid Text to Wicked and Outragious Princes, who are a Terrour to good Works and to good Men, and are the Miniſters of *Satan*, and not of God; and therefore I may as lawfully reſiſt the unjuſt Attempts of ſuch Rulers, as I may *reſiſt the Devil*, which I am commanded to do. It is ſo far from being ſinful to oppoſe the Powers when they invade our Religion and Properties, that it is our Duty to do it, and we ſin if we do it not.

Well, but we are told by our Pretenders to *all Non-Reſiſtance* that this thirteenth Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans* was writ in the Emperor *Nero*'s Time, and refers particularly to him. Now, he was a Perſecutor of the Chriſtian Religion, and made it his buſineſs to encourage all Vice and Villany, and to diſcourage and puniſh all that was good and vertuous; and yet the Apoſtle commands the Chriſtians to be ſubject to this Emperor, and that *not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake.*

This

This generally paſſes for a true Account of St. *Paul*'s writing this Epiſtle, but if we enquire into it, we ſhall ſee Reaſon to queſtion it; for the Apoſtle wrote this Epiſtle when he was at *Corinth*, as we read expreſsly at the End of it, which was at the Cloſe of the Emperor *Claudius*'s Reign, a little before *Nero*; and therefore St. *Paul* in this Chapter cannot refer to *Nero.* Or, if we ſhould grant that this Epiſtle was writ in the Beginning of that Emperor's Reign, yet this will not favour the Cauſe of thoſe Perſons whom I am contending with; for *Suetonius* and other Good Authors acquaint us that for the firſt five Years *Nero* ruled well, yea extraordinarily well, and let the Chriſtians live in Peace and Quiet: Yea, he ſhewed a great deal of Pity and Kindneſs even towards the worſt Offenders: when he was to ſet his Hand to a Warrant for the Execution of any Malefactor, he uſed to ſay, *O that I had never learnt to write! Seneca*, his Tutour, gives him an * Excellent Character. The Learned *Grotius* particularly takes notice that when St. *Paul* writ this Epiſtle, the *Chriſtians* were *not perſecuted* at *Rome*, but that both *Chriſtians* and *Jews* returned again to *Rome* after their Baniſhment. Thus we ſee all is plain and eaſy if we underſtand the Matter aright, and we may fairly give an account of thoſe foreſaid Words, that Rulers are *Miniſters of God for Good*, and *are not a Terrour to good Works*, &c. though we apply them to the Emperor *Nero.*

Nay, I am not unwilling to grant that this Chapter of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and that Injunction of St. *Peter* to the diſperſed *Jews*, *Submit yourſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's ſake, whether it be to the King as Supreme*, &c. &c. 1 *Pet.* ii. 13. enjoin us to pay Subjection and

* Nemo unus homo uni homini tam charus unquam fuit quàm tu populo Romano, *&c.* *De Clementiâ.*

Obedience to *Uſurpers*, thoſe that have no Right to the Throne, but have violently invaded it, and are in actual poſſeſſion of it. This is plain and undeniable if we conſider what was the State of the *Romans* and *Jews* whom thoſe Apoſtles writ to. As to the *Romans*, they were at that time under the Government of the *Emperors*, who had uſurped that Power by force, and by changing the former Conſtitution and Government which was that of a *Commonwealth*. Yet theſe *Emperors* were to be obeyed: to theſe *every Soul muſt be ſubject*, for *there is no Power but of God, the Powers that are, are ordained of God.* As for the *Jews*, they were by the Permiſſion and Providence of God brought into Subjection to the *Roman* Emperors, and made a Tributary People by them: for about ſixty Years before Chriſt's Coming, *Judea* was made a *Roman* Province by *Pompey*, who ſubdued all *Syria*: but notwithſtanding this, they muſt freely and voluntarily *Submit to Nero* or any other of the Emperors, and that *for the Lord's ſake*, becauſe, though this Particular Form of Government was unlawfully ſet up, yet Government in general is God's Ordinance, and therefore Obedience muſt be paid to theſe Governours for God's ſake, ſo far as they command us to do what is lawful, good, and juſt.

I know it is ſaid and urged by ſome that by *the Powers* which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of are meant only the *Lawful Powers*, for that is the Signification they ſay of the *Greek* Word uſed by him. But this is a Miſtake, for it is the ſame with δύναμις, *any Power* or *Authority*, as is clear from 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. *all Authority and Power*, lawful and unlawful; and from *Eph.* i. 21. *far above all Power*, good and bad. So in *Luke* xii. 11. *When they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto Magiſtrates and Powers*, τὰς ἐξουσίας, none can ſay that *Lawful Power* only is meant there. But the following Texts will thoroughly convince us that the *Greek* Word ſometimes

times ſignifies *Unlawful Power*; Luke xxii. 53. Col. i. 13. *the Power of Darkneſs:* Eph. ii. 2. *the Power of the Air*, that is, the whole Army of Evil Spirits: *the Power of Satan*, Acts xxvi. 18. *the Power of the Beaſt*, Rev. xiii. 12. When therefore ſome tell us that in *Rom.* xiii. the Word is ἐξουσία, not δύναμις, and therefore no *Magiſtracy* or *Power* is meant there but what is *Lawful*, they do but trifle; for we ſee plainly that the Word will not bear them out, and no Streſs is to be laid upon it: and accordingly when we are bid to be *ſubject to the Higher Powers*, and to *ſubmit to the King as Supreme*, the Apoſtles oblige us to pay Obedience to them though their Title be Illegal, though the Crown be Uſurped, though they are not our Lawful Sovereigns, for this was the Caſe of thoſe Perſons theſe Apoſtles wrote to. The *Roman* Emperors had ſet themſelves over them by force of Arms, though they had no Right either to *Rome* or *Judea*. Yet we ſee this doth not exempt either *Romans* or *Jews* from *Subjection:* yea, they were commanded to obey their Rulers notwithſtanding they were *Pagans*, yea notwithſtanding they were *Uſurpers*. To obey them, I ſay, in their *Lawful* Commands: but this doth not imply that they may not be *reſiſted* and *oppoſed* when their Commands are *Unlawful* to that degree that they directly tend to the ſubverting the True Religion, and the Fundamental Laws and Neceſſary Rights of the Subject. So much concerning the Main Proof which our Adverſaries rely upon out of the 13th Chapter of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*. It is to be obſerved that as they have miſtaken ſome other Doctrines in this Apoſtle's Writings, ſo they have done here; it ſeems St. *Paul*'s Divinity is not acceptable to theſe Gentlemen.

Some preſs thoſe Places of Scripture which require the Univerſal and Impartial Obedience of *Children* to their *Parents*, and *Servants* to their *Maſters* though they be *froward:* and they urge that

that Parents are not to be reſiſted, though never ſo Wicked: therefore much leſs ought *Kings* to be ſo uſed. The Anſwer to this is eaſy and obvious, that the Obedience of Children to their Parents and of Servants to their Maſters is not *ſo Univerſal* but that it ought to be with ſome Reſtriction; for they are bid to obey them *in the Lord*, that is, in Subordination to Him, who is their great Father and Maſter, whom they muſt obey though with the Neglect of ſome of the Commands (ſuch as are unlawful) of their Superiours. Nor are they any where forbid to deny Obedience to their *Parents* or *Maſters*, if by that Diſobedience they may hinder them from committing ſome great Sin and doing ſome great Miſchief, either to them, or to themſelves, or to the Publick. The ſame may be ſaid of *Princes* and *Higher* Powers, who endeavour the Extirpation of the True Religion or the Wholeſome Laws of the Country (the greateſt Miſchief they are capable of doing) they may lawfully be diſobeyed and oppoſed, and put from the Government, and confined, and have a Guard upon them, as *Mad-men* (for ſuch they are) who according to our Law are violently kept from doing harm.

Next, the *Primitive Practice* is alledged for *Abſolute Non-Reſiſtance*. The Rulers, though Heathens and Perſecutors, were not oppoſed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, nor by the Chriſtians in the immediately ſucceeding Ages. But this is not any ways prejudicial to the Doctrine and Practice which I have defended: for the Primitive Chriſtians are no Pattern to us in *Non-Reſiſtance*, becauſe they had no Civil Magiſtrates of their own, with whom they had *agreed* and *ſtipulated*. They lived under Arbitrary Princes, who could do what they pleaſed: the People had not limited their Power. But it is otherwiſe with *Us*, for we have confined our Kings by certain *Laws*, to which they have conſented, and therefore if they ſhould attempt to aſſume to themſelves

ſelves a Lawleſs Power, they may lawfully be checked and reſtrained.

Again, *Religion* was not Part of the *Legal Rights* of Chriſtians at that time, nay *Chriſtianity* was an *Illegal* Thing, and contrary to their Civil Conſtitutions. But now, and for a long time, ever ſince *Conſtantine the Great*, Chriſtians have had their Religion ſettled by *Law*, and it is become a Civil Priviledge: and therefore we are not bound, as the Chriſtians of old, to ſuffer, but we may ſtand upon our juſt defence. Thus we ſee Our Caſe and that of the Firſt Chriſtians are not the ſame: our Circumſtances differ from theirs, and ſo our Behaviour ought not to be like theirs. And as for the *Chriſtian Church itſelf*, it cannot but be acknowledged that the Condition of it is different in ſome Things from what it was at its firſt erecting. I could ſhew here, if I had not done it in an other Place, that there have been ſeveral Things *Altered* ſince the Beginning, and we muſt own the Alteration to be *Neceſſary*, the Nature of Things requiring that all Things ſhould not be the ſame now that they were at *the firſt Planting of the Church.*

But as for the Primitive Practice itſelf, our Adverſaries have no reaſon to boaſt of it; for though for a time no Reſiſtance was made againſt Princes by the Chriſtians, yet afterwards, within the Compaſs of the Primitive Times, this was practiſed by them. For when *Licinius*, the Emperor of the Eaſt, broke his Faith with the Chriſtians his Subjects, they took up Arms in their own Defence, and they were aſſiſted by *Conſtantine the Great*, as * *Euſebius* aſſures us.

An other Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian tell us that *Theodoſius*, an other Chriſtian Emperor, aſſiſted the Chriſtians that dwelt in *Perſia* againſt the King of that Country when they were ſeverely treated and

* Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. 10. cap. 8, 9.

per-

perſecuted by him and his Miniſters: and *Theodoſius* expreſsly defended the Lawfulneſs of that Practice, as *Nicephorus* (for he is the Hiſtorian I quote) acquaints us.

When the Emperor *Valentinian*'s Mother gave Order and Command for the baniſhing of *Ambroſe*, the People made Reſiſtance, and would not permit it to be done. For this ſee *Socrates's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, Book 5. Chap. 11.

And ſeveral other Inſtances of Violence uſed in a Juſt Cauſe, and eſpecially in Defence of Religion, againſt their Lawful Princes might be produced out of the foreſaid * *Socrates*, and out of † *Sozomen* and § *Evagrius*. Whence what a late Writer hath confidently ſaid, *viz.* || that *Non-Reſiſtance was preached and practiſed to the full extent of the Letter* by the Antient Chriſtians, appears to have no Foundation. And that borders upon Blaſphemy which he further ſaith, namely, that *he finds as univerſal an Agreement in the Point of Non-Reſiſtance as in any one Article of Faith*, even the Belief of a God, or of Heaven and Hell, and a Future Judgement. Thus, notwithſtanding the Objections raiſed from *Scripture*, and from the *Practice of the Primitive Chriſtians*, it is manifeſt that our Doctrine ſtands impregnable.

To evince this yet further, with reſpect eſpecially to our *Britiſh* Conſtitution, I will ſhew the Invalidity of the *Two Great Principles* which our *Paſſive-Obedience* Men go upon, namely, that of *Succeſſion*, and the other of *Abſolute Dominion*. Firſt, they ground the Irreſiſtibility of Kings on the *Neceſſity* (as they pretend) of an *Uninterrupted Succeſſion*. This they ſay cannot be altered, and therefore it is unlawful to put by the next Heir to the Crown, and in conſequence of that there muſt be *no Reſiſting*

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* Lib. 2. Cap. 10. † Lib. 7. Cap. 13. § Lib. 5. Cap. 7.
|| Mr. *Reeves*'s Preface concerning the Right Uſe of the Fathers,

him,

him, whatever his Deportment towards his Subjects be. But theſe Perſons are to be told that the Kings of this Nation were at firſt *Elective*: neither out of a particular limited Family did they chuſe their Kings, but where they thought fit: and in King *Egbert*'s Family the Election was firſt *fixed.* If we go back we ſhall find that the *Britiſh* Lords had no Notion of *Paſſive-Obedience* when they depoſed their King *Vortigern* becauſe he married *Hengiſt*'s Daughter, and was like to be ſeduced and perverted, by that means, by her Father, the General of the *Saxons*, who were then come over into *Britain*, and deſigned the Conqueſt of the Nation. They ſet up *Vortimer*, *Vortigern*'s Son, in his Place, who was a true Lover of his Country.

In the Time of the *Saxon Heptarchy* the Crown did not always deſcend by Inheritance and Lineal Succeſſion, and they did not think it unlawful to depoſe a King of the direct Line. Thus *Sigebert* the fourteenth King of the *Weſt Saxons* was expelled from the Government, and forced to retire into the Woods, where he was ſlain, becauſe of the barbarous Cruelty and unſufferable Exactions he uſed towards his Subjects.

And when the *Saxon Monarchy*, which was begun in *Egbert*, was ſet up, the *Hereditary Title* was not ſettled and obſerved, as might be ſhewed in ſeveral Inſtances, and *Non-Reſiſtance* was not practiſed. For King *Ethelwolph*, Son and Succeſſor of King *Egbert*, was on the very point of being depoſed by his Lords, merely for violating a Law which had been ſolemnly made and obſerved by the *Weſt Saxons*. *Eldred*, an other *Saxon* King ſucceeded his Brother *Edmund* in the Throne, though his Brother's eldeſt Son, *Edwyn*, was next Heir. This *Edwyn*, who was afterwards Succeſſor of King *Eldred*, by his Behaviour ſo incenſed his Subjects that a great Part of them deſerted him, and ſwore Allegiance to his younger Brother *Edgar*.

Harold,

Harold, the ſecond *Engliſh* King after the *Danes*, ſhould according to the Rules of Lineal Deſcent have been ſucceeded by *Edgar Atheling*; but *Harold* the Son of Earl *Godwin* ſtepped into the Throne on pretence that King *Edward the Confeſſor* had, when he was alive, deſigned the Crown for him.

Duke *William of Normandy* had no real Title to the Crown; for what Right could King *Edward*'s Promiſe and the Oath of King *Harold* give him, who was a Stranger and a Foreigner? Conqueſt was his Title. And when he died, the three Kings that immediately after one another ſucceeded him in the Throne were not of the direct Line from him: For *William Rufus*, who ſucceeded firſt, was not his Eldeſt Son and Heir, but *Robert* was. King *Henry* the Iſt, an other Son, younger than *Robert*, had no Title by Birthright. King *Stephen*, a Son of the Conqueror's Daughter, came not to the Throne by Hereditary Right; for the Empreſs *Maud*, or Prince *Henry*, Son of *Maud*, Daughter of King *Henry* the Iſt, was Heir to the Crown. Nor did King *John* reign by lineal Succeſſion; for *Arthur Plantagenet*, the Son of his eldeſt Brother, was the right Heir. And after the depoſing of *Richard* the IId, the Titles depended generally on the Diſpoſal of the Parliaments. King *Henry* the IVth had no Right to the Crown, and conſequently not his Son King *Henry* the Vth, nor his Son King *Henry* the VIth, but their Titles were allowed by Parliaments.

Afterwards the Courſe of Succeſſion hath been ordered and determined by *Parliaments*, as we ſee in the Caſe of Queen *Mary* and Queen *Elizabeth*. It was enacted that theſe ſhould ſucceſſively be Heirs to the Crown after the Death of King *Edward* the VIth, though King *Henry* the VIIIth was divorced from their Mother *Anne Bolen*, and conſequently they were made Illegitimate, and could not inherit.

King

King *Edward* by his Laſt Will and Teſtament left the Crown to the Lady *Jane Grey*, Daughter to the Duke of *Norfolk*, and put by both his Siſters *Mary* and *Elizabeth*; and the Judges, and Council, and Biſhops conſented to and approved of this Will, as knowing that it was not unlawful, as well as not unuſual in other Countries, for a King to appoint his Succeſſor. This ſhews what was the Judgement of the Wiſeſt and moſt Religious Men in the Kingdom about *Succeſſion.*

And that Parliaments have Power to alter or limit it, is evident from Queen *Mary*'s and Queen *Elizabeth*'s coming to the Crown, who had been once made Illegitimate, and conſequently uncapable of the Royal Dignity, but afterwards by Parliamentary Authority were made capable of reigning, and were actually inſtated in the Crown. And we find that in the thirteenth Year of Queen *Elizabeth* the Parliament then determined that it was in their Power to limit the Deſcent of the Crown, and they made it High Treaſon to aſſert that the Altering and Limiting the Succeſſion of the Crown is not at the Diſpoſal of the Parliament. Thus we have ſeen that the *Claim of Succeſſion* hath not been always obſerved in this Nation, that the Parliament makes Heirs to the Crown, and that Lineal Deſcent hath not been thought ſufficient to give any Perſon a Title to it.

I might take notice here, under this Head, of the Plea of the *Divine Right* of *Succeſſion*, and of *Primogeniture*, which ſome High-flown Writers have made a great Stir about, and tell us that it being a *Sacred Title*, it is impious to diſpute and queſtion it. But this is a Chimerical Notion, and hath no Foundation but in ſome heated Fancies of Bigoted Men. For if we conſult the *Sacred Records*, we ſhall there inform ourſelves that *Hereditary Succeſſion* and *Primogeniture* were not obſerved by God's own People, and that even with the Approbation

probation of God himſelf. After Kingſhip had been firſt erected amongſt them in the Perſon of *Saul*, even when his Father was alive, we ſee that God provided no Succeſſor in a Lineal Deſcent. He ſet up *David*, who was a younger Brother, and we find that upon his Death he was not ſucceeded by his Eldeſt Son, for *Solomon* was not ſuch; he had an Elder Brother, whoſe Name was *Adonijah*, as we are aſcertained from 1 *Chron.* iii. 3, &c. *Rehoboam* was *Solomon*'s Eldeſt Son and Heir, but the People depoſed him becauſe he diſcovered a Tyrannical Mind, and refuſed to eaſe them of their Taxes and Burthens; and *Jeroboam* was choſen King by the Ten Tribes, and God approved of it, 1 *Kings* xii. 22, &c. *Jehoahaz* ſucceeded King *Joſiah* in the Throne, and was Anointed and Inaugurated by the High Prieſt, though he was *Joſiah*'s Youngeſt Son, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 30. And in ſeveral other Inſtances we ſee the *Lineal Succeſſion* broken: But I mention theſe foregoing ones becauſe we find them Allowed by God himſelf. Which clearly confutes the Notion of *Succeſſion* and *Primogeniture:* for God would certainly have had regard to theſe, if there had been any *Real* and *Unchangeable Right* in them. In vain then do ſome Men boaſt of the *Divine Right*.

An *other Ground* they proceed upon is this; they fancy the *Government* of *Great Britain* to be *Abſolute*, and that the *Monarchy* is *Unlimited*; which is a very groſs Miſtake. It is true, there are Arbitrary Princes in the World. The *Grand Signior* ſends a Bow-ſtring to diſpatch whom he pleaſes, without any Formality of Law. All that the People have is his, and he can take it when he pleaſes. Hence it is that they ſeem oftentimes to be poorer than they really are, that they may keep what they have. The *Grandees* and *Nobles* in the *Great Mogul*'s Empire have no Lands and Poſſeſſions, but only Penſions which are at his diſpoſal, and

and he can deprive them of them when he thinks good. You may imagine then that the other Subjects of a *lower Rank* have not Propriety in their Poſſeſſions. It is partly ſo in the *Czar*'s Dominions, the Lands and Goods are tenable as long as he pleaſes, and no longer. Some High-Flyers among us have intimated in their Writings that they would have it ſo here: All that we have is at the King's Command, he is Proprietor of all. If they were ſo treated Themſelves, it would be well, if others were not involved in the Miſchief. This they merit for their groſs Folly in lifting up Kings to the utmoſt Height of Arbitrarineſs. But any one that conſiders Things aright muſt be forced to acknowledge that the Kings of *England* are not Arbitrary and Abſolute, but are put in Truſt, and muſt anſwer for it.

To this purpoſe let us take a ſhort View of the Excellent Nature of our Conſtitution. It is a *Mixed Government*, for here is *Monarchy*, the firſt and beſt Form of ruling the People, according to the Judgement of *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*. Here is *Ariſtocracy*, that is, the Nobles and Chief of the Nation have a Share in the Government, which was approved of by *Moſes*, and by the moſt eminent Lawgivers of *Greece*, as *Lycurgus* and *Solon*. Here is *Democracy*, that is, a Popular State, wherein the Common People rule by their Repreſentatives; all our Laws are made by the Common Conſent, as in the famous Commonwealths of *Athens* and *Rome*. The *Britiſh* Government is made up of all theſe, and reſembles that of the Wiſe *Lacedemonians*, which was a Mixture of King, Nobility, and Populace, for the *Ephori* were choſen out of this laſt. This is the Nature of our Government, and is certainly more eligible than any Unmixed Simple Species of Government. Here the Excellencies of all the Individual Models of Ruling meet together and conſpire, the Prerogative of Kings, the Dignity of

Nobles, the Priviledge of the People. Sir *John Forteſcue*, who was Lord Chief Juſtice of *England*, and afterwards Chancellor in King *Henry* the VIth's Reign, writ an Excellent * Book to this purpoſe, wherein he gives us an admirable Deſcription of the *Engliſh Conſtitution* and *Laws*, to which I refer the Reader; but ſhall only tell him what is the Subſtance of that which he largely inſiſts upon, namely, "The King of *England* governs his People "by Politick Power, which is a Mixed Power, "and therefore he cannot make his Will his Law, "he cannot alter the Laws of the Kingdom "as he pleaſes, becauſe his Power is Mixed and "Limited".

From whence it rationally and undeniably follows, that if he ſubverts the Laws of the Kingdom, he may be compelled by his People to alter ſuch Reſolutions. No Man can deny this who obſerves what is the Original Contract in *Magna Charta*, which runs thus; *If the King violate any Part of the Charter, and refuſe to rectify what is done amiſs, it ſhall be lawful for the Barons and People of England to diſtreſs him by all the ways they can think of.* This is the Fundamental Law of our Nation, and is a plain and manifeſt Proof and Confirmation of what I have all along advanced. And it hath been exemplified in the *Barons War*, and in the actual diſplacing of Kings. *Edward* the IId, and *Richard* the IId, were depoſed from the Regal Power by their Parliaments, Biſhops as well as Temporal Lords and Commons: For though it is true they *Reſigned*, yet it was becauſe they knew they ſhould be forced to quit their Crowns, if they did not. This is founded upon the Premiſes, that there is a Compact, an Agreement between King and People: he covenants with them to Rule well, and they with him to obey him as long as he doth ſo. This

* De laudibus Legum Angliæ.

Contract

Contract is obſervable at the *King's Coronation*, when the People are publickly and ſolemnly *asked* whether they conſent that he ſhall be their King. And this alſo is plainly contained in the *King's Oath* which he then takes, that *he will confirm the Laws to the People and Clergy, and maintain the Goſpel, and keep Peace, and execute Juſtice.* When this Oath and Contract with the People are violated by him, they are at liberty to withdraw their Obedience, and to bring him to Reaſon by force, if they cannot do it by fair and gentle Means. The Reaſon is manifeſt, becauſe the *Conſtitution* authorizes it, the *Frame of the Monarchy* juſtifies it, becauſe it is not Arbitrary and Abſolute, but Conditional and Limited. And the Condition is included in the Oath which the Prince takes, where it is implyed that he rules upon certain Conditions, and that the People obey him on certain Conditions only. And truly thoſe Princes that are Good and Vertuous do not diſlike this, nay they are glad to have a Reſtraint, for that reminds them of their Duty. *If I reign well, uſe it for me; if ill, uſe it againſt me*, ſaid the Emperor *Trajan* of the *Sword* delivered into his Hand when he was created Emperor, at his delivering it back again. It was the Saying both of *Theodoſius* and *Valentinian*, and it is recorded in the *Civil Laws*, * *It is a Confeſſion worthy of the Majeſty of him that reigns, that he is bound and confined by the Laws.* None but bad Kings deſire to be uncontroulable, and to be at liberty to do as much Hurt as they pleaſe. And herein likewiſe they hurt themſelves, and endanger their Empire; for that is a True Remark which an Obſerving Man hath made, † That thoſe Powers are moſt ſafe and laſt longeſt which keep within Bounds,

* Digna vox eſt Majeſtate Imperantis, legibus ſe alligatum fateri.

† Ea demum tuta eſt potentia quæ viribus ſuis modum imponit. *Valer. Max. lib. 4. caſ. 2.*

and are not Licentious and Arbitrary. It is for the real Good and Welfare of Princes to be under a Check, and it is much more ſo for the People.

Having thus ſtrengthened our Poſition by Irrefragable Arguments, I will in the next Place add the *Teſtimonies*, and in them the plain Sentiments of thoſe that have had occaſion to ſtudy this Point, both Foreigners and thoſe of our own Church. * *Luther* makes reſiſting of the Emperor a diſputable Matter, and calls it *a Queſtion of Danger* in reſpect of theſe Texts, *Whoſo ſmiteth thee on the right Cheek, turn to him the other alſo. Servants, be ſubject to your Maſters with all Fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward:* and then he adds, *We muſt beware that we take nothing in hand againſt God's Word, and afterwards be plagued in our Conſciences.* A little after he ſtrains Non-Reſiſtance a great deal higher, † "When Gover-" nours and Rulers, ſaith he, are Enemies to God's " Word, then our Duty is to depart, to ſell and " forſake all we have, to fly from one Place to " an other, as Chriſt commands. We muſt make " and prepare no Uproars and Tumults by reaſon " of the Goſpel, but we muſt ſuffer all things". But he is ſoon off of this Kind of Language, for in his Chapter of *Conſtrained Defence* he aſſerts that *the Emperor may lawfully be reſiſted if he be Tyrannical, and deſigns the Deſtruction of Religion.* Thus § *Sleidan*, a very impartial and faithful Hiſtorian ſaith of *Luther*, that he held it lawful to oppoſe the Emperor by taking up Arms, if there were occaſion, though he was of an other Opinion at firſt. The Matter of fact was this; he wrote a little Book, when the *Anabaptiſts* were up in a Tumultuous manner, wherein he held that the Magiſtrate was not to be reſiſted. But afterwards, when the Proteſtant Princes of *Germany* were entering into a

* Colloq. Menſal. † Chap. 16. § Commentar. lib 8.

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Defenſive League, and when the Lawyers opened the Point of Reſiſtance: *Luther* confeſſed his Errour, and aſſented to the Doctrine of Reſiſtance in caſe the Emperor ſhould make War againſt them; and forthwith he put out a Book in Print to defend the Cauſe, and to rectify Mens Opinions concerning it, and to ſhew the vaſt Difference between the Caſe he had appeared in before and that which he was concerned in now. *Calvin*'s Opinion is well known, as he hath ſet it down in the laſt Chapter of his *Inſtitutions*. *Beza* followed him in this Doctrine, and ſo did the *Scotch* Divines, *Buchanan* and *Knox* in particular. So likewiſe did *Urſin* and *Paræus*, who were of the *Palatinate* Church. Lo here the Judgement of ſome of the firſt famous Reformers!

Now, let us obſerve the Doctrine and Practice of thoſe of our own Realm. We muſt remember then that there was a War (called the *Holy League*) raiſed by the Popiſh Princes of *France*, the Duke of *Guiſe* eſpecially, to ſuffer no King on the Throne but a Catholick, to exclude the King of *Navarre* and the Prince of *Condé* from the Royal Succeſſion, if the then preſent King ſhould die without Iſſue. Hereupon Queen *Elizabeth* aſſiſted the Hugonots of *France* with Ships, Money and Weapons when they were up in Arms under the Conduct of the Princes of the Houſe of *Bourbon*, chiefly the Prince of *Condé* and the Duke of *Vendoſme*, to baffle the *Guiſes* and defeat the Plots of the *Roman Catholicks*, to defend the *Proteſtant Religion*, to ſtand by King *Henry* the IVth, when his Catholick Subjects deſigned and endeavoured his Ruine, and the Extirpation of that Family. And it is well known that the *Clergy* in that Queen's Reign once and again, yea a third time, granted her Subſidies in their *Convocations* for aſſiſting the diſtreſſed *French* againſt their Prince and Sovereign, and the *Dutch* againſt the King of *Spain*, this being in defence of their Religion; for they held it *lawful* to make Reſiſtance

in caſe of their Religion and Liberties being invaded: otherwiſe they would not have given Subſidies to that end and purpoſe. Afterwards King *James* the Iſt, and King *Charles* the Iſt, aſſiſted the *Rochellers* againſt their Lawful Prince. A Faſt was appointed and obſerved to that very purpoſe by this latter, and in the Form of Prayer for imploring God's Bleſſing on that Expedition, there were theſe Words; *We beſeech thee to ſtrengthen the Hands and encourage the Hearts of thy Servants in fighting thy Battles, and defending thy Altars that are among us and in all the Reformed Churches.* As for our Divines, this was the Senſe of Biſhop *Jewel*, as we may ſee in his *Defence of his Apology*, p. 16. where he ſaith that *neither Luther nor Melancthon taught the People to rebel againſt their Prince, but only to defend themſelves by all lawful Means againſt Oppreſſion, as did David againſt Saul.* This was the Senſe of Biſhop *Bilſon* in his Book *of Chriſtian Subjection* and *Unchriſtian Rebellion*, in way of Dialogue, dedicated to Queen *Elizabeth*. *God compelleth his Servants to defend their Religion by force*, is a Marginal Note of Mr. *Fox*, on occaſion of the Reſiſtance of the *Waldenſes* and the People of *Piedmont* againſt the *Duke of Savoy* their Leige Lord. And he maintains in the ſame Place, (*Acts and Monuments*, Vol. 2.) that Subjects may ſtand to their own Defence againſt their Prince for Religion. And the Judgement of other Writers of our Church in thoſe Days might be produced.

But our Churchmen ſince Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time have perverted this, as well as ſome other Doctrines. The Chiefeſt of them at the latter end of King *James*'s Reign and the beginning of King *Charles* the Iſt's, changed this Principle to pleaſe the Court, to ingratiate themſelves with Great ones, and by that means to carry on their own Deſigns which they had then on foot, for they promiſed themſelves to be Abſolute and Irreſiſtible, if their King

was

was ſo. Firſt, they aſſerted the Divine Right of Monarchy in their Canons in the Year 1640. held that all other Forms of Government are unlawful and diſapproved of by God. But this is ſuch Nauſeous flattering of Crowned Heads, that no Sober Man can brook it. The Government placed in one Single Perſon, though in ſome reſpects it hath the Advantage of other Models of Government, is no where enjoined in Scripture as excluſive of other Forms, as was ſaid before. From the Principle of Divine Right the Pulpits advanced further, and maintained this blaſphemous Poſition, That the Monarch was as abſolute as the Divinity, that is, his Power is not to be Reſtrained, he is uncontroulable in all things, and none can Call him to an Account.

In King *Charles* the IId's Reign this flattering Humour was revived, and the Generality of the Sermons and Writings of the Clergy cried up Paſſive-Obedience and Non-Reſiſtance. In 1675, when the Church and Court Party were deſigning to extirpate Diſſenters, and to favour the Popiſh Cauſe, this Oath was enjoined to be taken by all Perſons that were concerned in Church or State, *That it is not lawful on any Pretence whatſoever to take up Arms againſt the King, and that they will not at any time endeavour the Alteration of the Government either in Church or State.*

And even at this day, among ſome of our Churchmen this wild Notion of Unlimited Non-Reſiſtance prevails; they declare that though a King of *England* ſhould turn *Turk*, *or Jew*, yea, if it could be ſuppoſed that he could turn a *Devil* (they are their own very Words) yet he is to continue King, and is not to be reſiſted though he introduces Mahometiſm or Judaiſm, or any thing that is Helliſh and Diabolick. So it is, theſe Men in the former Reigns ſcrewed up themſelves to too high a Peg, and now they are loth to take them-

ſelves down lower: Having raſhly taken up an abſurd and groundleſs Opinion concerning Government and Governours, they refuſe to lay it down, leſt they ſhould be thought to Recant, and call themſelves Fools. But they muſt be told that as it was a great Folly to ſuck in ſuch falſe Notions concerning the Nature of Government, ſo now to *perſiſt* in theſe miſtaken Sentiments, or to extenuate and palliate them is a greater Folly. A late Author hath ſignalized himſelf by this in his *Defence of the Church of England* (as he calls it) where he defends the Doctrine of Paſſive-Obedience as the Doctrine of our Church, but with ſuch Evaſions and Contradictions as the Reader cannot but ſtand amazed at, and himſelf bluſh when he reads what he hath written. One Paſſage I cannot but mention here, namely, that ſome Churchmen maintained that Paſſive-Obedience was to extend even to the Miniſters and *Officers* of Princes, no leſs than the Princes themſelves; *thoſe* were not to be reſiſted any more than *theſe*. Which ſort of Language he excuſes thus; *Theſe Words were uſed, when the popular Fury was ſtirred up by Seditious Men, and threatened Deſtruction to the King and Church*; then ſuch Doctrine might be preached, whether True or Falſe: as if he had taken up ſomething of that Opinion which that Party objects to others, that ſpeaking falſely or doing *evil* may be tolerated becauſe of the Good that may come of it. He allows not of the Thing; but, however, becauſe it made for the *Cauſe*, he thinks it is Excuſable. Again, he mitigates it by ſaying the *Act of Uniformity* encouraged them, which commands every Miniſter to ſubſcribe to this Declaration, that *it is not lawful upon any Pretence whatſoever to take up Arms againſt the King, or thoſe that are commiſſionated by him.* Then it ſeems the *Act of Parliament* was on their Side, and their *Subſcription* alſo, which he ſaith was *religiouſly made.*

How

How then came they to *break* this Solemn Engagement at the *late Revolution*, and not only to abet and encourage ſuch as took up Arms againſt thoſe that were *commiſſionated* by King *James*, but againſt the *King himſelf?* Who were they but *profeſſed Sons of the Church of England*, that invited over the *Prince of Orange?* In the Liſt of the Names of thoſe that were ſent to him, was not * Dr. *Hickes* among them? Were they not Churchmen that called in a Foreign Power, and joined with it againſt the King, when they had ſeen that he diſpenſed with the Laws, and was undermining the Church of *England*, and had begun to deprive ſome of the Clergy of their Places and Profits, and thruſt ſome out of Colleges, and planted Papiſts in their Room, and impriſoned ſome of the Biſhops, and ſuſpended an other? Then Nature began to recoil, and Principle to flag, and Non-Reſiſtance vaniſhed. It is obſerved by a Great Man, that as ſoon as the Eccleſiaſtical Court was ſet up by King *James*, † *by vertue of which* (he ſaith) *they had Apprehenſions of their being removed out of their Church-Freeholds, they thenceforth thought that the Precept of Preaching up Loyalty in their Sermons, as before, did not bind ſemper & ad ſemper.* And then they thought of making uſe of ſome other way; they could not conceal their Regret and Diſcontent, but (as one expreſſes it) *roared ſo loud as to be heard to Holland.* And now Armed Forces from thence are received with great Rejoicings, and the Invader is invited into the City, and ſolemnly thanked in a *Declaration* which was drawn up by the Archbiſhop and Biſhops that were then at *London*, and was carried to him by the Biſhop of *Ely*. This greateſt Bigot of them all got him a New Chariot very fine and modiſh, and trolled in it

* See the Biſhop of *Sarum's* Vindication. p. 57.

† Memoirs of the Earl of *Angleſey*.

every

every day to Court, and who but he with the Prince? The Archbiſhop and the reſt adviſed that King *James* ſhould be laid aſide, and that the Prince ſhould take the Government upon him, and be made Protector of the Kingdoms, which was but a Genteeler Way of Unkinging him. And afterwards the Parliament approved of the raiſing of an Army to go into *Ireland*, and under the Conduct of King *William* to beat King *James* out thence, and accordingly they did it. Here was more than Prayers and Tears; here was *Actual Reſiſtance* with a witneſs. From all which it manifeſtly appears that ſome Mens fierce Contention for *Abſolute Non-Reſiſtance* is a mere Cheat, and no Matter of Conſcence, as they pretend. It is uſeful for their Purpoſe when they have occaſion to uſe it, that is, to keep the People in quiet, and make them obedient to the Governours whom they approve of, and no longer. Here is no Religion in all this, but their own Intereſt and Security. Here is nothing of Conſcience, for *now* we ſee that they were not really convinced of what with ſo much Earneſtneſs and Zeal they profeſſed; for when they came to be Tried, they revoked their former Profeſſions and acted contrary to it, and confuted all their Boaſts of Loyalty and Non-Reſiſtance by their Practice.

And particularly concerning Dr. *Tillotſon* it may be obſerved that he was as much for Non-Reſiſtance and Paſſive-Obedience as any Man; for in * one of his Printed Sermons he declared it to be his Judgement that a Miniſter is not obliged to preach the Goſpel, and that no other Man hath a Right to profeſs or propagate the Chriſtian Religion if the Magiſtrate withſtands it. Which ſounded ſo ſcandalous, that, when he was preaching it, King *Charles* himſelf is reported to have ſaid, *We have got Hobbes in the Pulpit to day.* And afterwards,

* On Joſ. xxiv. 15.

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at the Death of that Excellent Man the Lord *Ruſſel*, he ſolemnly declared that it is unlawful to make any Reſiſtance againſt the Higher Powers. How he carried it towards that Great and Worthy Perſon is well known, and is much to his Diſcredit, he importunately diſturbing him, even when he was under the Sentence of Death, with the Notion of Non-Reſiſtance, and preſſing upon him Repentance for his Fact in acting contrary to it. Yet this very Perſon was as forward and active as any in promoting the *Reſiſtance* which was made againſt King *James*, and he was ſufficiently rewarded for it. It ſeems the Doctor was for Reſiſtance only when it was ſafe, and when he could get by it. In the Sermons which he preached when the Prince of *Orange* arrived he renounced his former Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance. Many good People verily thought that he and other Preachers were in good earneſt when they maintained that Doctrine, and that they meant as they ſpoke and writ, and accordingly imbibed that Doctrine with ſome Eagerneſs: but ſince, by theſe Mens allowing of, and encouraging the Reſiſtance againſt King *James*, and by their Swearing Allegiance to King *William* they are convinced that they were impoſed upon by thoſe Preachers, and that there is no Faith and Truth in ſuch Profeſſions.

The Univerſity of *Oxford* in a Decree made by them in the Year 1683, ſolemnly aſſerted the Neceſſity of Abſolute and Unconditional Obedience, and condemned all Reſiſtance without Exception: yet ſoon after this, when the Prince of *Orange* was landed they ſent one of the Heads of a College to invite him to come to *Oxford*, aſſuring him that the Univerſity would declare for him. And they Signed the *Aſſociation* which was then on foot, for the Churchmen at that time aſſociated to aſſiſt the Prince of *Orange* with their Lives and Fortunes, and one hath well obſerved that Dr. *Jane* the Chief

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Profeſſor of Divinity in that Univerſity was the firſt that Signed this Aſſociation there, though in the Year 1683, before mentioned, he was the Perſon that drew up the Univerſity Decree which ſo highly applauded the Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance, and in which one of the Poſitions was, *That it is unlawful for Subjects, without the Leave of the Supreme Magiſtrate, to enter into any Leagues, Contracts and Aſſociations for defence of themſelves or Religion.* Thus they delude the Word, and though they cry out againſt *Occaſional Conformity*, they are for *Occaſional Reſiſting*, and their *Paſſive-Obedience* is only *Occaſional*, or when they pleaſe. Thoſe that preach up Non-Reſiſtance, contradict it in their Practice. Though they have filled whole Libraries with their Diſcourſes and Sermons in defence of Unlimited Submiſſion to the Prince who is upon the Throne, yet if he attempts to thruſt them out of their Places, and to endanger their Revenues, we ſhall preſently hear them in an other Tune than that of Non-Reſiſtance, as we ſaw exemplified in the late King *James*'s Reign, when the moſt zealous Patrons of that Cauſe refuſed to act according to the Tenour of what they had preached and written: They would not ſtand to thoſe Maxims which they had with ſo much Ardour taught the People. We cannot here but take notice that the All-wiſe Providence of God over-ruled in this Affair; if theſe Clergymen and their Friends who had imbibed their Doctrines had not proved falſe and faithleſs, and run quite counter to their former Sentiments and profeſſed Principles, Popery had proſpered under King *James*'s Conduct, and we had had no Deliverer to help us. But by the Wiſe Diſpoſal of Heaven our Deliverance was brought about by theſe Mens *Inſincerity* and *Faithleſſneſs*; and beſides, future Times are taught not to attend to the Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance, though never ſo warmly delivered by the

the Clergy, for they have in the face of the World expoſed and confuted this Doctrine by their own Actions and Behaviour at the late Revolution, which was effected by the Principle of *Reſiſtance.* And it was ſuch a Reſiſtance as Neceſſity required, ſuch a Reſiſtance as Sound Reaſon and even Common Senſe dictated, ſuch a Reſiſtance as Religion and Chriſtianity allowed of, ſuch a Reſiſtance as preſerved our Church and State from Ruin. So that the Author of the *Hiſtory of Paſſive-Obedience*, who gives us a large Bead-roll of our Divines that maintained that Doctrine, had better have concealed their Names; and it would have been more for their Reputation to have had their Diſcourſes and Writings forgot. And as for thoſe of our preſent Divines, whoſe Spirit of Self-contradiction is ſuch that they ſtill in their Sermons and Writings defend their former Point, no leſs can be ſaid of them than this, That they ſtudy to perpetuate their own Shame.

As for thoſe *Biſhops* who refuſed the Oath to King *William*, it is plain that they did it not out of *Conſcience*, but Stiffneſs and Obſtinacy, or Pride, and Unwillingneſs to retract what they had maintained ſo long; or ſome of them might do it from fond Hopes of higher Advancement, if the Revolution ſhould have a Reverſe. If theſe Fathers of the Church had refuſed the Oath out of *Conſcience*, they muſt have *ſent to their Clergy*, and *told them beforehand* what would be required of them by the Government, they muſt have *warned* them againſt the Oath, and *ſhewed them the Sinfulneſs* of it: and after they had taken it, they ſhould have called upon them to *Repent* of that wicked Act. This, as *Spiritual Fathers* and Faithful Paſtors, they ſhould have done. But they did none of theſe Things, but when their Clergy *asked their Advice*, and *deſired their Counſel*, they only told them what they intended to do *themſelves*, but left their Clerks

Clerks and Curates to their liberty, and never checked or reproved them afterwards. Who then can dream that theſe Prelates acted out of a Principle of *Conſcience?*

And as for the reſt of the *Non-Swearing Churchmen*, though it may be ſaid indeed that they are true to their Principles, yet becauſe their Principles are bad, very bad, they are on that account the worſt of the Clergy; and they are the rather to be reputed ſo becauſe they pretend to act from an Impulſe of *Conſcience* and a *Senſe* of their *Duty*, whereas this is a mere Deluſion. We muſt have *the Right Line* on the Throne, though we have *Popery* and *Slavery* with it: *theſe* ſhall be welcome for the ſake of *that*. Though there never was any ſuch Thing in fact as the obſerving of the Lineal Deſcent *without Interruption*, though there never was any ſuch Thing Enjoined by God, yea, though the Contrary hath been expreſsly approved of by him in Scripture, though there is no ſuch Thing adjuſted to Reaſon and Good Senſe, yet they talk of *Conſcience*, and they are very angry if you do not believe that they *ſpeak ſeriouſly*, and act like *Men of Principle*; when as a poor *Diſſenter's Conſcience*, which he is wont to plead in defence of his Non-Conformity, is voted by them *Perverſeneſs of Spirit*, *Stubbornneſs* and *Obſtinacy*, and *Hypocriſy*. The Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* and ſix Biſhops obſtinately refuſed to obey King *James*, when he commanded them to read and diſperſe his *Declaration for Liberty of Conſcience*, and yet at the very ſame time, in their Petition to him to excuſe them, they ſay their holy Mother the Church of *England* is both in her Principles and in her conſtant Practice unqueſtionably Loyal. It might be obſerved that they choſe to take their Lodgings in the Tower, rather than to allow of Reading the aforeſaid Declaration, yet this very ſort of People heretofore read the *Declaration for Sports on the Lord's Day*, and it is to be queſtioned whether any of theſe Perſons would boggle at the

ſam-

ſame. Where then is *Conſcience?* Theſe Men proclaim it to be a horrid Sin to uſe any Violence againſt Rulers, though they deſtroy the very Foundations of Religion, and bring in all Prophaneneſs and Impiety: yet they have approved of the perſecuting of *Non-Conformiſts*, and taking their Goods and Poſſeſſions from them, and puniſhing them with the greateſt Violence and Fury for not complying with a Ceremony, or a Thing Indifferent in Religion. Where is *Conſcience* now? And do we ſee that theſe Men who preach up *Paſſive Obedience* to Rulers are very *Patient* and *Submiſſive* in other Things, and towards other Perſons? Do we ſee that they, above the reſt of their Neighbours, are Humble and Meek, and backward to repell Injuries, and that they obſerve our Saviour's Injunction of *not reſiſting Evil*, Mat. v. 39. Are they ſtrict Obſervers of the Laws againſt *Revenge?* No ſuch Thing do we take notice of in their Lives and Practices: but they as forward to oppoſe force by force, and as unwilling to bear Wrongs and Injuries as other Men. To keep up an Indifferent Ceremony or Rite in the Worſhip of God they have held it lawful to confiſcate, impriſon, or baniſh their Deſſenting Brethren, they thought it good Service to perſecute and plague the moſt Innocent Perſons. How come they then to be ſo Tame and *Paſſive* in one Caſe only? Is all their *Self-denial* ſpent in the *non-reſiſting of Kings?* This ſhews that it is no matter of *Conſcience*, and that their whole Carriage in this Affair is a *Cheat*, and that they will confute it in their Practice, when they think fit.

Nor is the taking the Oath, which the Generality and main Body of the other Clergy have ſubmitted to, reconcileable with *Conſcience*, I do not mean as to the *Lawfulneſs of the thing* (for nothing is more juſt and lawful) but *that Conſcience* which they pretended to before, and by which they acted, when

when they preached up *Non-Reſiſtance:* for their late Reſiſtance of K. *James*, and taking the Oath of Allegiance to King *William* are a downright *Contradiction* to what they preached and printed before, namely, that *all Reſiſtance whatever of Kings is damnable.* This was the Doctrine which the Eccleſiaſticks prized themſelves upon, and boaſted of in their Sermons and Writings. No Church in the World, they told us, was ſo exact in their Obedience to Kings as Theirs, and this Exactneſs conſiſted in *Unlimited Non-Reſiſtance.* This was that which King *James* depended upon: he fully relied on this Principle of the Church of *England*, which they had ſo frequently and zealouſly avowed. But they deluded him, and certainly it was the beſt Deluſion that ever was in this Nation.

But what can they ſay now? why, let them *ſay no more of it*, but *confeſs* they were in an *Errour*, and for the future *ſhew their Diſlike* of what they ſaid before. They have often called upon their People and Pariſhioners to *repent of their Sins*, and to *confeſs them* in order to Pardon. Now their People may juſtly expect of *them* that they would acknowledge their Fault, and give ſome Signs of Repentance. This Repentance ought to be Open and Publick, becauſe the Crime was ſo and in the face of the World: If they take not this Method, who will ever give credit to them again, notwithſtanding their peculiar Character and Office? Their loud Cries for Obedience and Loyalty will be looked upon for the future as a mere Pretence, and it will always be ſuſpected that there is an ill Deſign at the bottom.

And truly it is *above Suſpicion*; for the Doctrine and Practice of Non-Reſiſtance doth naturally and unavoidably promote the Worſt and moſt Miſchievous Deſigns. It is obſervable that *Reſiſtance* and *Schiſm* are the Great Guns that are played off upon the

the People, to fright them out of their Wits and Senſes. Theſe are the two main Engines, they work with, to bring about their Deſigns. It is the former of theſe that I am to ſpeak of at preſent; all that make any Reſiſtance againſt the Government are concluded to be in a State of *Damnation*, which Word they pronounce with a wonderful Emphaſis, to ſcare People into a good Opinion of the Worſt Government. I will ſhew that this is Miſchievous on theſe three Accounts: 1. It effectually promotes the Arbitrary and Deſpotick Power of Princes, and conſequently the Slavery of their Subjects. 2. It opens a wide door to Popery, and thereby to Superſtition and Idolatry. 3. It is miſchievous to Princes themſelves, as well as to their Subjects.

Firſt, Hereby the Boundleſs and Arbitrary Dominion of the Prince is ſet up, the Reſult of which is the Bondage of the People; for when their Hands are tied up, he can do what he will with them, and they are bereaved of all Power to help themſelves, and they muſt endure whatever his Pleaſure ſhall impoſe on them. This was Mr. *Hobbes*'s darling Principle, *viz.* That the Supreme Magiſtrate may do what he pleaſes, and no Man muſt make oppoſition to his Commands. *Nothing the Sovereign can do to a Subject, on what Pretence ſoever, can properly be called Injuſtice or Injury. When a Sovereign puts to death an innocent Subject, though the Action be againſt the Law of Nature, yet it is not Injurious. No Man hath liberty to reſiſt the Word of the Sovereign. Whatſoever Promiſes or Covenants the Sovereign makes, are void.* Theſe Paſſages are in *Hobbes*'s Writings, this is the Divinity of the *Leviathan.* Here I would have it obſerved, and the rather becauſe I don't find it taken notice of by others, that ſeveral of our Churchmen, and one or two of them Biſhops, have drawn their Pens againſt Mr. *Hobbes*, and have endeavoured to confute

his Notion concerning the *Unlimited Power of Crowned Heads*, and yet it is the very Opinion which they themſelves and their Friends have been advancing theſe many Years, and have zealouſly preſſed on the Belief of the People. This is perfect *Hobbiſm*; and thus we ſee that though our Divines ſeem to diſlike the *Leviathan* (as ſome of their Writings teſtify), yet they embrace its main Doctrine with open Arms, that is, that Kings have an Abſolute Power over their Subjects. What is this but Slavery, and what can you mention that is more Pernicious!

Secondly, Non-Reſiſtance is the Door that opens the Way to *Popery*, which is a Spiritual Slavery, and is always attended with the Temporal one too. *Hobbes*'s Prince makes his Religion (if he will have any at all) and that of others as he pleaſes, and then we cannot be far off from the Church of *Rome*, which makes uſe of all powerful Charms to gain Proſelytes to her Communion. The Doctrine of Paſſive-Obedience directly leads to *Rome*, and you may take this as an infallible Maxim, that all Paſſive-Obedience-Men are carrying on (whether they know it or not) the Deſign and Work of the *Romaniſts*. When Non-Reſiſtance is entertained as a Principle, the Sovereign may ſecurely and ſucceſsfully make uſe of *Force* and *Violence*, *Fire* and *Fagot*, and every one knows the near Affinity between theſe and *Popery*. Therefore the Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance was lately revived, and urged afreſh to prepare us for the more vigorous Reception of a Popiſh Prince, and that we might the more willingly become Paſſive Aſſes for the Prieſts to ride on.

Thirdly, As Non-Reſiſtance is miſchievous to *Subjects*, ſo is it the ſame to *Princes* themſelves. King *Charles* the Firſt found it ſo; and if the late King *James* were alive, and we could appeal to him, he would determine on this Side, he would tell us how fatal this Principle proved to him, for

he

he relied on this as a firm Pillar to ſupport his Arbitrary Government, he was confident that this would not fail him; but he was miſerably deceived, and the Practice of thoſe who had before cried up Non-Reſiſtance did not anſwer to their pretended Principle, which was the occaſion of that Prince's Ruin. Alas! he did not conſider that the Clergy's Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance was for their Own Sake, not for His: they allow him an Unlimited Power, that he may not deny the like to them, and do whatever they would have him do. For the Clergy affect a deſpotick Power *themſelves*, and therefore that they may attain to it, they contend for the ſame in their Sovereign; that is, when they have a mind that Kings ſhall do what is according to their Humour, they would not have them diſobeyed, or, in plainer terms, they would not have themſelves diſobeyed. They tell us that the Doctrine of Non-Reſiſtance belongs to the Eccleſiaſtical as well as Civil Governours; Prieſts as well as Kings are *Unaccountable*, as * One lately hath parallel'd them in this Particular: *The Church is accountable to no Power upon Earth*, ſaith the *Rehearſal:* So that there are *two Unaccountables Kings* and *Prieſts*, but eſpecially the latter; for the Men of this Kidney exalt the Pontificate above the *Regale*, the *Mitre* above the *Crown.* Though they extravagantly extoll the Power of Monarchs, yet they advance that of Prelates with a greater Extravagancy. They hold Theſe to be Kings and Princes of a higher Nature than Crowned Heads, and therefore the reſiſting of the former is more Criminal than the reſiſting of the latter. *As the Prieſthood is more excellent than the Kingly Office, ſo he is worthy of greater Puniſhment who dares move his Eye againſt it.* This is Dr. *Hickes*'s Theology, which he bleſſes the World with in his

* Dr. *Atterbury*, Concio ad Cler. p. 36, &c.

Two Treatiſes, p. 201. And if the Monarch himſelf dares do this, it is at his utmoſt Peril, of which there are plain Inſtances. It is by the divine Providence ordered that this ſhould be a Terrour to Princes, and teach them to rule with Moderation and Juſtice, and not abuſe their Power. This likewiſe ſhould warn their Favourites and all their Subjects, not to flatter them into their Ruin by telling them that they are exempt from all Reſtraint, and they may do what they pleaſe, and commit all kinds of Wickedneſs without any Check or Controul. Is not this to animate and encourage them in their moſt exorbitant Actions, and (as the Conſequence of that) to procure their own and their Prince's Deſtruction? Thus we ſee how Miſchievous and Fatal this Doctrine is.

The Reader will ſcarcely gueſs what I am to tell him in the next Place, that is, that theſe Eccleſiaſticks who pretend ſo much to Loyalty, and profeſs their Abhorrence of all reſiſting of Crowned Heads, are the moſt diſloyal Men upon the face of the earth, aud take occaſions at all times to deſpiſe their Commands, to inſult and oppoſe their Authority and their Perſons. I quote not Mr. *Prynne*, but Dr. *Brady* to teſtify that both the Higher and the Lower Clergy, were the Authors and Promoters of moſt of the Treaſons and Conſpiracies, the Rebellions and Seditions in this Kingdom. In his *Complete Hiſtory of England* he affords us abundant Inſtances of this; and in his *Preface* to that Book he plainly tells us, that *the Biſhops and Clergy in all times* laboured to caſt *off their Feudal Dependance on the Crown, and to be wholly Free from Subjection to the Secular Power.* In the Times that *we* have been acquainted with, the Churchmen here in ſeveral Inſtances ſhewed themſelves deficient in their Loyalty. Thus they are engaged by the Firſt Canon of the Church, which with the reſt of them is eſtabliſhed by Royal Au-

Authority, to preach up the *King's Supremacy over the Church of England* in oppoſition to the Claim made by the *Biſhop of Rome*, four times a Year; and this *to the uttermoſt of their Wit, Knowledge and Learning, purely and ſincerely, without any Colour or Diſſimulation:* But this is not done once a Year by the Generality of our Clergy: Many leave out thoſe Words in the uſual Prayer for the King, *Over all Perſons, in all Cauſes as well Eccleſiaſtical as Civil.* Theſe Men, who ſhould be open and ſincere, make uſe of the Jeſuitical Diſtinction of *de facto* and *de jure*, and thereby debauch their Own and Other Mens Conſciences. I have obſerved that the Clergy generally make the ſilleſt, ſhalloweſt, and moſt faint-hearted Addreſſes to the King or Queen, whereas it might be expected that their great Pretenſions to Loyalty ſhould inſpire them with great Flights, and more than ordinary Strains of Subjection and Dutiful Submiſſion. They are commanded to read Her Majeſty's *Proclamation againſt Vice and Prophaneneſs* once in every Quarter of a Year, but this Royal Command is generally neglected, which is no good Proof of their Obeying the Supreme Authority; and beſides, it ſhews a Backwardneſs to remind the People of their Duty, and to ſuppreſs and diſcountenance Debauchery and Prophaneneſs: and they think that no Man is ſo zealous as to inform againſt them, and make them ſuffer the Penalty of the Law. However, this omitting to read and publiſh the Proclamation may give ground to ſuſpect their Unwillingneſs, at leaſt their Indifferency about obſerving this Royal Injunction. All Parſons, Vicars and Curates are commanded in every *Brief, deliberately and affectionately to publiſh and declare, and earneſtly exhort, perſuade and ſtir the People up to extend their liberal Contributions*, &c. yet they ſeldom or never do this, although they read this expreſs Injunction with their own Mouths. I have

often wondered that it thus goes on neglected, and the poſitive Command of the Prince is diſobeyed even in the Face of the Congregation. They are commanded to read the *Book of Canons* once a Year in their Pariſh Churches; but neither the King's nor the Church's Law is obſerved.

The *High-Fliers*, who pretend to more Loyalty and Religion than others, ſhew nothing of either; they neither take the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majeſty, nor hold Communion with the Church of *England*: they pray not for the Queen, they keep Conventicles againſt her Command; and other Marks of their Diſloyalty and Diſobedience are viſible to all the World. One of them ſaith, * *The Church groans under the Prerogative-Act, and the beſt Churchmen complain of it as a mighty Grievance and Burden.* An other ſaith, † *The Supremacy is Oppreſſive, which being exerciſed, muſt forfeit the King's Salvation. It is a dangerous Complaiſance in Prieſts to plead for it.* A third tells us that § *the Act of Supremacy is an Oath of Unfaithfulneſs to the Church.* A fourth hath more eſpecially ſignalized himſelf above all the reſt: tho' he fills almoſt every Page with *Monarchy* and *Epiſcopacy*, yet he tramples on the Laws made by our *Queen* and her *Biſhops*. It was an *Iriſhman* who in the Habit of a *Prieſt* ſtole the Crown: Loe! here is one who is really of that Character, and would more effectually than the other rob Princes of their Crowns and Scepters, by perſuading others by his own Example to withdraw their Allegiance from them. He is always talking of Kings and Government, and yet refuſes Submiſſion to his Lawful Sovereign. He ſcares Men with the Cry of Rebellion, and yet actually rebells againſt the Laws of the Nation. Theſe are

* The Character of a Low Churchman
† *Hill*'s Anſwer to the Rights.
§ Appendix to the Rights of God's Church on Earth.

your Paſſive-Obedience-Men, theſe are they who ſtand up at this day for Non-Reſiſtance, and yet openly reſiſt and oppoſe the Government: They preach unlimited Obedience to the Higher Powers, and yet diſobey them whenever they diſpleaſe them. How Ridiculous and Contradictory are ſuch Loyaliſts as theſe! or indeed, can we perſuade ourſelves that theſe Men are ſerious, and really believe thoſe Principles that they maintain! I deſire the Reader to obſerve that one of the moſt zealous Advocates for Non-Reſiſtance hath freely and openly acknowledged that * *Judicious and Good Men, and ſuch as are Friends to Kingly Government have allowed of the Lawfulneſs of Reſiſtance:* and he himſelf, after a whole Sermon in Defence of Non-Reſiſtance, refuſes to tell his Audience whether he be for it or no. His Heart miſgives him, he faulters, he ſhuffles. So the Council and Managers in the late Trial, who were as Hearty Enemies to *Reſiſtance* as any could be, yet avowedly and openly, again and again juſtified the Reſiſtance that was made by the Nation againſt the late King *James* at the Revolution; they owned This to be a Lawful Exception to the General Prohibition of Reſiſtance.

This is that which I undertook, *viz.* to ſhew the *Limitations* of this Doctrine. Upon no other Accounts is it lawful and juſtifiable to reſiſt our Rulers with Violence, than upon their wilful ſubverting the Fundamental Laws of the Kingdom, and thoſe of Religion, and thus in a groſs manner Actually to abuſe their Power. I ſay *Actually*, for mere Attempts of altering the Laws, and ruining the Conſtitution of Church and State, are not a ſufficient Motive to ſtir the People up to depoſe a Sovereign, nor ought they to do it upon mere Jealouſies, Suſpicions and Conjectures, much leſs upon falſe and groundleſs Reports and wilfully

* *Atterbury, Conc. ad Cler.*

invented Rumours. Further, I muſt add that before we proceed to take theſe violent Meaſures, we muſt try all other Means, we muſt apply ourſelves to all Methods and Expedients of a gentler Nature. When we have found that none of them will prove effectual, we may then (and not before) defend our Religion and our Laws, our Perſons and our Properties by force. This muſt be our laſt Reſort, and we muſt be ſatisfied that it is the only way left to ſupport the Proteſtant Cauſe.

Now, bating theſe *Limitations* and *Exceptions*, our Obedience to Kings and Magiſtrates muſt be *Entire:* For Loyalty and Obedience to Governours are inlaid in the very Principles of that Religion which we profeſs. And truly This is the beſt Foundation and firmeſt Baſis of Thrones, this is the ſteadieſt Supporter of Crowns and Scepters: for This commands us to obey Rulers *for Conſcience ſake*, acquainting us that theſe Powers *are ordained of God*, and therefore *he that reſiſteth them reſiſteth the Ordinance of God.* Theſe Things being ſettled on Mens Minds, cannot but produce univerſal Obedience and Subjection, and, as the genuine Conſequence of that, a Catholick Peace and Safety, undiſturbed Welfare and Proſperity in a Nation.

SERMON I.

AGAINST

Indifferency in Religion,

Which is ſo Notorious

In this Preſent AGE.

1 KINGS, xviii. 21.

How long halt ye between two Opinions? If the LORD *be God, follow him: but if* Baal, *then follow him.*

IN King *Ahab*'s Reign the celebrated Idol of *Baal* (the Sun, or whatever it was, for there are great Diſputes, among the Learned about it) was generally worſhipped by the Ten Tribes of *Iſrael*: for now Altars were erected, Groves were dedicated, Prieſts were conſecrated, Sacrifices were offered, and Temples built to it. But at the very ſame time the Adoration of the True God, after the manner which he had preſcribed, was not diſowned and laid aſide: ſo that the Worſhip was divided, and there were Adorers on both ſides. For it was grown Indifferent whether GOD or *Baal* was applied to, it was all one to them which way of Religion they took: the greateſt numbers of People were fluctuating between both. Hereupon *Elijah*, who was a Man of great Integrity and Zeal, obſerved this their Carriage and was much troubled at it: the Reſult of which you find in the Words of the Text, where he freely and boldly puts this Queſtion

to

to them, and thus expoſtulates with them: *How long halt ye between two Opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.*

As if he had ſaid, Your Religion hath been divided already between God and the Calves which *Jereboam* ſet up; and do you now again divide yourſelves and your Worſhip between GOD and *Baal?* You neither fix in the Service of the True God, nor do you reſt in the Worſhip of a Falſe One. For Shame, be not thus unſettled and irreſolved in your Religion: let it be ſeen what you are, and whom you ſerve: diſcover openly whoſe Worſhippers you are. Your Neutrality is odious, your Indifferency is deteſtable. Why do you thus doubt and heſitate? Why do you waver and halt betwen the True Religion and Idolatry? Why do you dally and ſhift after this manner? What makes you ſo giddy and fickle? What is the Reaſon that you hover, and hang between both? What means this amphibious Temper? How long will ye thus reel and ſtagger? Do you intend to remain always thus doubtful and indifferent? I wiſh you would come to ſome Reſolution. Do not pretend to ſerve the True God, when you ſerve *Baal* at the ſame time. You had as good ſay, you will not ſerve him at all, for you cannot truly and really ſerve both at once. You are greatly miſtaken if you entertain ſuch a Notion: for the moſt High God will not endure a Rival.

From which plain dealing of this holy Prophet I preſent you with this ſeaſonable Propoſition, That in the Matters of Subſtantial Religion there muſt be no Neutrality: An Unconcerned and Regardleſs Spirit in Things which are Sacred and Indiſpenſable, can in no wiſe be allowed of, but ought to be reproved and condemned. In a Word, Indifferency is an inexcuſable Fault in Religion.

In proſecuting this Subject, I will Firſt ſet before you ſome *Inſtances* and *Examples* of this In-

Indifferency, which will be ſerviceable to illuſtrate and ſet forth the Nature of it. Secondly, I will ſhew how *Dangerous* and *Pernicious* it is. Thirdly, I will bring down this Diſcourſe to *Ourſelves*, and to the Practice which is ſo prevailing among *us* at this day. Whence it will be manifeſt that there was never more need of treating on this Head than in this Age, wherein there are ſuch vaſt numbers of Men that ſhew a perfect *Indifferency* in Religion. Heſitancy and Unreſolvedneſs are their *Principle*, if it be tolerable to uſe that Term here. They are Fluttering, and always in Suſpenſe. It is impoſſible to reduce them to any certain Kind, to any particular Claſſis. It is too apparent that this is the Character of Multitudes of Perſons in this Kingdom, which makes this Diſcourſe too ſeaſonable at preſent.

The firſt Thing I undertake is to ſet before you ſome *Inſtances* (beſides that in the Text) of this unhappy Temper and Genius which I have propounded. It is evident that in all Ages there hath been this *Halting*. The *Iſraelites* began betimes, even in the Wilderneſs, to *bear the Tabernacle of Moloch* and that of *the Teſtimony* together, *Am.* v. 25. *Acts* vii. 43. Afterwards we read that *Micah made* both *an Ephod and Teraphim*, Judg. xvii. 5. the former was conſecrated to the True God, and the latter (which were Images) to the Falſe ones. *Jeroboam* was ſo vain and wicked as to imagine that God's Worſhip and the Golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, 1 Kings xii. 28. could be reconciled. In reference to this Difference of Worſhips, I conceive the Prophet's Words are to be underſtood, Hoſ. vii. 8. *Ephraim is a Cake not turned*, baked on one Side, and dough on the other, partly a *Jew*, and partly following the Idolatries of the neighbouring Gentiles and of *Jeroboam*. And therefore in the former Part of the Verſe it is ſaid, *He hath mixed himſelf among the People*, he hath learnt a Medley

Medley of Worſhip, he blends different Religions together, and is ſincere and entire in none. So *Zephaniah* mentions them *that worſhip the Hoſt of Heaven upon the houſe tops, and that ſwear by the Lord, and ſwear by Malcham*, that is, they worſhipped the True God as well as the Falſe ones.

We have an other ſignal Inſtance of this Religious halting in the *Aſſyrian* Colonies which were ſent by the King of *Babylon* to *Samaria* immediately after the Captivity. Leſt the Lions wherewith the Country was infeſted ſhould devour them, the True God was worſhipped; and becauſe they were under ſome Dread of the Idols of that Place, theſe alſo had Worſhip paid them. It is therefore expreſsly ſaid, *They feared the Lord and ſerved their own Gods*, 2 Kings xvii. 33. They made ſome Eſſay of a Right Way of Worſhip, and at the ſame time Idolatry and Superſtition were practiſed. And afterwards, the Poſterity of this People behaved themſelves according to their firſt Riſe and ſetting up: they proved to be a Compound of different Religions, partly *Jews* and partly *Heathens*, ſometimes pretending to favour one Perſuaſion and Way moſt, at an other time the other, as *Joſephus* in his *Antiquities* deciphers theſe *Samaritans*.

If we paſs to the New Teſtament, we may learn from St. *Paul*'s reproving the *Corinthians*, Epiſt. 1. Chap. 10. that they made bold to be preſent at the Idol-Temples, and to eat of the Things which were offered to them, which he interprets as *partaking of the Table of Devils*, ver. 21. whilſt they likewiſe ſolemnly addreſſed themſelves to the *Table of the Lord*. This was a kind of Mixture of Idolatrous and True Worſhip.

From St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Galatians* we may obſerve that there was a ſort of Men at that time who mingled the Law with the Goſpel, Judaiſm with Chriſtianity, againſt which the Apoſtle inveighs

veighs with great Zeal. I might paſs to the Example recorded by St. *John* in Rev. iii. 15. of the Church of *Laodicea* which is ſaid there to be *lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot*; not cold, that is, no profeſſed Enemy to the Faith; and yet not hot; that is, no zealous or true Friend of Religion: but ſhe was ſomething between both, and, as occaſion ſerved, ſhe could favour either Truth or Errour.

The *Gnoſticks* of old were of this very Make and Conſtitution: their Religion was made up of Judaiſm and Paganiſm as well as Chriſtianity, and they were affected accordingly. *Euſebius* and other Antient Writers tell us that they were fully perſuaded and publickly profeſſed that it is an *Indifferent* Thing to own or deny Chriſt in time of Danger and Perſecution. Whether it was Chriſt or an Idol ſet before them to worſhip, was the ſame thing to them.

If ſingle Perſons may be produced, I could mention the * Emperor *Alexander Severus*, who in the ſame Chappel worſhipped *Abraham*, *Chriſt*, and *Apollonius Tyanæus*, and even the *Pagan Gods*, and their Images ſet up there. The † Emperor *Adrian* had the Pictures of *Chriſt* and the foreſaid *Apollonius* hung up in his Gallery, both whom he admired and reverenced. Our own Chronicles relate that *Redwald*, King of the *Eaſt-Saxons*, the firſt Prince of his Nation that was baptized, in the ſame Place that he worſhipped *Our Saviour* ſet up alſo an Altar for the Service of his *Idols*. The *Code* makes mention of a ſort of Perſons call'd *Cælicolæ* who firſt aroſe in the Reign of the Emperor *Honorius*, as appears by the Laws made by him againſt them: they were a baſtard Kind of Religioniſts, between *Chriſtians* and *Jews*: they profeſſed the Worſhip of the former, and with all

* Lamprid. in Severo. † *See* Spartianus.

added

added a great many Things which ſavoured of *Jewiſh Superſtition.*

As for the *Mahometan* Sect, it is well known that it is compounded of *Jewiſh* and *Pagan* Rites, with a ſmall Sprinkling of *Chriſtian* Doctrine and Truth. *Popery* is a Miſcellaneous Religion, being patched up of a vaſt number of *Jewiſh* Ceremonies and *Heathen* Cuſtoms and Practices. We have been certainly informed that the *Jeſuites* permit their Converts in *India* and *China* to worſhip their *Pagods*, ſo they will comply with them as to the Chriſtian Worſhip, or rather the Popiſh Service which they inſtruct them in. They ſuffer them to be Heathen Idolaters, on condition they will embrace the *Roman* Idolatry. And if we look into the Lives and Manners of Men in the World, we ſhall ſee a great deal of this ſtrange Mixture: we may diſcern theſe Dappled Devotioniſts, theſe Party-coloured Worſhippers every where. It is indifferent with them which of theſe two, the *Lord* or *Baal* ſhall be their Maſter. This is that curſed *Indifferency* which poſſeſſes Mens Minds, and which is ſo Dangerous and Miſchievous. Which leads me to the

Second Thing I deſigned in this Diſcourſe, namely, to ſhew you how evil and pernicious a thing it is to act thus.

1. This Neutrality argues *Inconſtancy* and *Levity*, which is a Character very reproachful, as well as dangerous. The Halting Motion is Unſteady and Staggering. Neuters never ſtand faſt: Such a one was *Aquila Ponticus*, who tranſlated the Old Teſtament out of *Hebrew* into *Greek*; he was firſt a *Pagan*, then a *Chriſtian*, afterwards a *Jew*. Such an other was * *Ecebolius*, (whom likewiſe I might have mentioned among the foregoing Inſtances) the converted Philoſopher and Rhetorician of *Con-*

* Socrat. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3 c. 13.

ſtantinople.

ſtantinople, who was in the Emperor *Conſtantius*'s Reign a zealous *Chriſtian*, yea all the time *Conſtantius* was a *Catholick*, he was one: but when the Emperor turned *Arian*, he turned with him, and profeſſed the ſame Opinion that he did. Afterwards, when *Julian* (whoſe Tutor he was) came to the Throne, and profeſſed himſelf a *Pagan*, he was fierce for *Paganiſm* and *Idolatry*. But when this Apoſtate Prince was dead, and *Jovinian* the next Emperor ſucceeded him, he was very forward in embracing *Chriſtianity* again, and he would needs be reſtored to the Church. Thus he was a *Chriſtian* and *Pagan* by turns, and he could as eaſily have been a *Jew*; and, if *Mahomet* had been then in the World, a *Turk*: for being a right Neuter, it was in his way to be of All Religions, and of None.

There are great Numbers of Men that are of this *Ecebolius*'s Temper; they are Unſtable, Unſteady, Inconſtant, a ſort of Reeling and Staggering Chriſtians. As the Times are, ſuch are their Conſciences. If they ſee an Opportunity, they ſtand ready for it: they will relinquiſh what they now profeſs, and embrace the next Offer; and if another comes, they are as ready for that. They differ from themſelves, and they may yet differ more; ſo that we can have no certain Idea of them. Theſe Politicians (a Name which they are very proud of) are prepared to face about, and to be of that Side which hath the greateſt Secular Advantages attending it. *Pythagoras* would have his Diſciples worſhip God with turning their *Bodies* round, and *Numa* adviſed to obſerve that Poſture: but theſe Men pretend to worſhip by doing the like with their *Souls*; they alter their Faith and Perſuaſion according to the different Emergencies that ariſe; they turn about as they ſee occaſion. Theſe are True Comedians; they can act diverſe

Parts, and put on various Shapes, and be what they pleaſe. So true is that of the Apoſtle St. *James*, *A Double-minded Man is Unſtable in all his Ways*, *James* i. 8. Neuters are Variable and Unconſtant. Which makes this Temper ſo ſcandalous in *Chriſtianity*, which is a Fixed and Certain Thing, grounded on a firm Bottom, built on a ſure Baſis, guided by unerring Rules. On this account Fickleneſs and Wavering in our Religion is moſt ſhameful and ignominious, unworthy of the Holy Name we profeſs, and utterly to be abhorred by all that have any true Senſe of Virtue and Godlineſs.

2. This argues *Hypocriſy*, which is no leſs odious in Chriſtianity than the former. The *Foot* that is *ſound* and *whole*, doth not *halt*. He that is True and Sincere in his Religion is not Double-minded: whether Religion be countenanced, or whether it be oppoſed, he profeſſes it with an equal and regular Conſtancy. That of the Apoſtle in *Eph.* vi. 14. is a very remarkable Advice, *Stand, having your Loins girt with Truth*, that is, with Sincerity: for it is this which fixes and eſtabliſhes us: This eminent Piece of Spiritual Armour, the Girdle of Truth, ties and faſtens us, and will not ſuffer us to ſwerve from our Profeſſion. But on the contrary, the Man whoſe Heart is not right before God is Unſettled and ever Changing: as on the other hand this Unſettled Genius is too evident a Token that he is not Hearty and Upright. To be thus always tottering is not only an undeniable Sign of *Lightneſs* (the Inconſtancy which I ſpoke of before) but of *Diſſembling*. You may conclude that Man's Principles are Falſe and Unſound, who is ever wavering in his Religion: in plain Terms you may look upon him as an *Hypocrite*. And what greater Reproach can there be than this? For an Hypocrite mocks both God and Man, is falſe to himſelf and all the World, and therefore juſtly

juſtly hated by all, and upon ſerious Reflection abhorred even by himſelf.

3. This Religious Halting and Indifferency makes way for *Final Apoſtacy*. This muſt needs be ſo becauſe Hypocriſy is not laſting, but directly leads to Falling away. The Neuter will ſhew himſelf at length, and declare on that Side which he thinks moſt Advantagious, though it be with the utter renouncing of Truth and Godlineſs. His Dubiouſneſs in Religion is a direct Step to Infidelity and Atheiſm. It will come to this at laſt, that there is no Religion, no ſuch Thing as Truth and Righteouſneſs; all is Opinion, and nothing Real. Phyſicians ſay rightly that a *Vertigo* or Giddineſs in the Head is the Forerunner of an *Apoplexy* or an *Epilepſy*, and is indeed but a lower degree of theſe Diſtempers. It is certainly thus in Religion: when you ſee Men turn round ſo often, they muſt needs be Dizzy and Giddy, and then wonder not if they be not able to Stand: their Vertiginous Motion will end in a miſerable Defection, in a Falling Sickneſs of the worſt Sort: you will ſee them bereaved of Senſe, lying in great Diſorder, abandoning all Religion, wholly revolting from the Faith, hating the Truth which they ſeemed once to love, and furiouſly perſecuting thoſe whom before they embraced; yea, not only perſecuting Men, but fighting againſt God. This ſhews the Evil and Miſchief of Indifferency in Religion.

4. This appears farther from the ſevere *Penalties* which attend it. It hath been obſerved that Neutrality in the *State* hath proved unſucceſsful: and ſeveral Inſtances might be alledged of Perſons who thought to ſave themſelves by their Indifferency, but thereby ran themſelves into Miſchief, and were ruined by both oppoſite Parties. *Plutarch* tells us in the Life of *Solon* the Great

Athenian Lawgiver, that he made this Law, that whenſoever any Publick Inſurrection or Tumult ſhould ariſe, he that ſtood unconcerned and took neither Part ſhould have the Repute of an infamous Perſon. But certainly Unconcernedneſs and Indifferency in *Religion* are much more reproachful, and therefore meet with a ſeverer Puniſhment. God will remarkably ſhew that he endureth no Rivals. They that place *God's Ark* in the Temple of *Dagon* ſhall ſoon find that Idol caſt down and broken in pieces. God threatens to *cut off* ſuch as *ſwear by the Lord and by Malcham*, Zeph. i. 4. that is, thoſe who pretend to worſhip the True God, and yet pay Adoration to Idols at the ſame time. * *Woe be to the Sinner that goeth two ways*, ſaith the Son of *Sirach*. This *Woe* was felt by *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who were immediately ſtruck by the Hand of God, becauſe they divided themſelves between the Service of Chriſt and Mammon, and *kept back part of their Goods* to their own private Uſe, which they had dedicated to the publick Service of the Goſpel. From what is ſaid of the *Laodicean* Church, *Rev.* iii. 15, 16. we learn that as *Lukewarm* Water is nauſeous to the Stomach and is thrown up, ſo is Indifferency in Religion very unacceptable to God, and even loathed by him. He cannot bear with theſe Tepid Profeſſors, but will at one time or other ſhew his Diſpleaſure againſt them.

I could here inſert Modern Hiſtories: I will content myſelf with the Examples only of thoſe great Princes *Henry* the IIId, and *Henry* the IVth, Kings of *France*. The firſt met with an untimely Death, becauſe he was not *Papiſt enough*. The ſecond was a Proteſtant, and afterwards out of Fear turned Papiſt, but was really neither Papiſt nor Proteſtant:

* Eccluſ. ii. 12.

he

he was aſſaſſinated, becauſe he favoured both, and *halted between two Opinions.* Such Trimmers politically imagine they ſhall be Gainers by being ſo, but they generally find our Saviour's Words verified, *He that ſaves his Life, ſhall loſe it.* The Timorous and Neuters are commonly defeated of their Hopes and Deſigns, and they fare the worſe for being ſo favourable to themſelves. I will conclude this Head with the Apoſtle's Words, 1 Cor. iii. 12, &c. *If any Man build upon this Foundation Gold, Silver, Precious Stones,* that is, a Sincere Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, or *Wood, Hay, Stubble,* that is, a Politick Compliance, and even ſhrinking from the Faith if occaſion requires, *every Man's Work ſhall be made manifeſt,* both theſe Sorts of Superſtructures ſhall be brought to trial. *Sincerity* and *Worldly Wiſdom* ſhall be diſtinguiſhed from one an other, as *Gold,* and *Silver,* and *Precious Stones* are diſtinguiſhed from *Wood, Hay,* and *Stubble. If the Man's Work abides,* he *ſhall receive a Reward,* the ſincere, ſteady and perſevering Chriſtian ſhall be recompenſed: but *if the Man's Work be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer Loſs,* the Unſteaddy and Indifferent ſhall certainly be puniſhed, and they muſt be beholding to extraordinary Mercy if their Repentance be accepted of; they ſhall be ſaved *ſo as by Fire,* that is, according to the generally received Interpretation, they ſhall eſcape with great Difficulty. Thus I have briefly repreſented to you the extream Evil and Miſchief of that Indifferency in Religion which the Text ſpeaks of.

It remains now that I *apply* all that hath been ſaid: And this indeed it that which I mainly deſigned. It was Mr. *Brightman's* Opinion, that *Laodicea* in the Book of the *Revelation* denotes *England.* I will not at preſent enquire into the Truth of it, but this is certain and unqueſtionable, that *England* at this day abounds with *Men* of the

Laodicean Temper, ſuch as are Lukewarm and Indifferent. They are ſomewhat of the Humour of the People of *Goa* in the *Eaſt Indies*, who worſhip the firſt living Thing they meet with in the Morning, whatever it be: they adore by Chance, and worſhip as it happens. As Indifferent as they are, they have this fixed Principle, that they reſolve to change their Religion with the Times and Places they converſe with. We read that the *Romans* among their many Gods had one with two Faces: they dedicated only the firſt day of the Year to him, but theſe Men whom I am ſpeaking of ſeem to devote their whole Lives to this Idol, and declare themſelves to be of a Double-faced Religion, yea of a Religion of any Face or Shape. You ſhall hear theſe our *Engliſh Laodiceans* talk thus: What a Stir is here about *Popery!* and how ſtrangely are People concerned for *Proteſtantiſm!* whereas there is no great Difference between theſe two, and it is not very material which of theſe any Man makes choice of. What Hurt is there in the *Roman Catholick* Perſuaſion, or what Difficulties are thoſe which ſome Men ſo ſtick at? All the Controverſies between both Parties may eaſily be accommodated, and a Peaceable Man cannot fail of bringing them to a good Agreement. Proteſtants and Papiſts differ only in ſome Small and Petty Things, not in any Subſtantial and Fundamental Points, and it is an eaſy Matter to reconcile one with the other. There are thoſe who have done this, and made the Thirty Nine Articles ſpeak the Language of the Council of *Trent*. If Popery ſhould come in, we ſhall make a Shift with it, and in a ſhort time we ſhall like it well enough when we are once uſed to it. And we know that the *Church of Rome* is owned and profeſſed by our Divines to be a *True Church*, and in the True Church it is certain that *Salvation* is to be had, and what would we deſire more!

But

But be not deceived with ſuch crude Pretences as theſe; abandon not your Religion, I mean the Reformed Proteſtant Religion, becauſe *Neuters* (who are Hypocrites and Atheiſts at the bottom) ſee no great Difference between this and Popery. But boldly tell theſe Men you ſee a Vaſt and Irreconcilable Difference between the one and the other, and that there is ſuch a *Great Gulf* fixed between them that it is utterly impoſſible to bring them to an Union and Agreement. Let theſe Men know that the Diſputes between thoſe of the Church of *Rome* and the Proteſtants are not about little and inconſiderable Things, but ſuch as are Subſtantial and of vaſt Moment, on the Belief and Practice of which our everlaſting Happineſs or Miſery depend. The main Things wherein we differ are weighty and of mighty Importance, and ſome of them concern the very Fundamentals of Chriſtianity.

Beſides, let me tell you, if you hearken to what theſe Neuters ſay, you give ear to the vileſt Race of Men upon the Earth: for theſe have the ſame Thoughts of Judaiſm and Turciſm that they have of theſe other two Perſuaſions before-named: yea, they think any one Perſuaſion is as good as an other and therefore they make no Preference of any. The *Jews* New Moons, and the Grand Signior's Creſſcent, and the Chriſtian Croſs are alike to them. The Moſaick Ceremonies, the Alcoran of *Mahomet*, and the Goſpel of Chriſt ſignify the ſame with them. If they had been in King *Ahab*'s Days, they would have held that there is no conſiderable Difference between the *Lord* and *Baal*, that the Worſhip of the True God and of a Pagan Idol is the ſame, or alike lawful. For they do in a manner aſſert this when they maintain that the Worſhip of the Papiſts and the Proteſtants is alike, for they differ as Idolatry and

True Worſhip. We adore the True God in the right manner, but their giving Adoration to the Virgin *Mary*, to Crucifixes, to Croſſes, to the Conſecrated Bread, to Saints and Angels, is no leſs Idolatrous than the Pagans worſhipping their Idols, for both are giving Divine Worſhip to Creatures, which is the very Eſſence of Idolatry. So that you ſee thoſe Perſons whom I am now rebuking are Men of reprobate Minds, and have loſt all Senſe of the Truth when they make no Difference between the Religion of the Proteſtants and Papiſts; for it is clear that theſe two differ as much as True Worſhip and Idolatry. Be not then miſled by the Words or Practices of thoſe Men who are poſſeſſed with a Spirit of Neutrality.

And ſo as to *other Doctrines*, attend not to what Men of Indifferency ſuggeſt to you concerning them. What is the Meaning of this great Noiſe, ſay they, againſt *Atheiſts* and *Scepticks*, againſt *Deiſts*, *Socinians*, and *Unitarians*, yea and among ſome of late againſt *Remonſtrants* and *Arminians!* Are there any of the Opinions which theſe Men hold that are worth appearing againſt? Yea, are there *any* Opinions and Doctrines of that Value that they are worth contending for, and that every Pulpit and Preſs muſt ring of them? Is it ſuch a great Matter to be Orthodox? What occaſion is there for this great Zeal and Concernedneſs about any Point? This is the Language of a great many among us, and they profeſs that it is not conſiderable on which ſide the Deciſion is made.

But theſe Men ought to know that they are under a groſs Miſtake, and that *Doctrines* are of great Concern and Moment in our Religion; as we cannot but gather from the Injunction laid upon *Timothy* by the Apoſtle, that he *charge ſome that they*

they teach no other Doctrine, 1 Tim. i. 3. and from the Puniſhment threatened to thoſe that obſerve not ſuch a Charge, *Gal.* i. 9. *If any Man preach any other Goſpel to you than you have received, let him be accurſed.* We ſee here that there is a Fixed Doctrine and a Fixed Goſpel. And it is certain that the *ſame* Doctrines and Principles of Religion which were delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, ought to be received in all Ages of the World afterwards; and likewiſe it is certain that Truth and Soundneſs of Doctrine are as neceſſary as the Regulating of our Manners and Practice.

And as for thoſe particular Evangelical Doctrines of *Election*, *Supernatural Grace*, *Juſtification by Faith* alone, *Original Sin*, *Perſeverance*, &c. this is to be ſaid with manifeſt Truth, that they are thoſe Doctrines and that Goſpel which the Apoſtles ordered to be taught, and which they themſelves taught, and the Contrary are an *other Doctrine* and *an other Goſpel.* And beſides that the Holy Scriptures (which are the only Standard of True Doctrine) preſent us with thoſe forementioned Truths, I muſt take notice of this likewiſe that they were reſtored to us in a wonderful manner at the *Reformation*, and they were for many Years vigorouſly maintained and profeſſed by the *Church of England*, and the Generality of her *Clergy*. Whence it follows that thoſe who reject theſe Doctrines expoſe the Scriptures themſelves to open Scorn, and vilify our *Reformers*, and run counter to the profeſſed Articles of our Church, and deſpiſe the Judgement and Determination of our Divines, and in the whole betray their own Preſumption and Arrogance.

To ſay all in a few Words, Popery is *an other Goſpel*, *Socinianiſm* and High *Arminianiſm* are *an other Goſpel:* and thoſe Perſons who patronize theſe ſhew that they are unconcerned for the main Prin-

ciples

ciples of the Chriſtian Religion, that they care not what becomes of *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, and conſequently that they are regardleſs of the Honour of God and of his Son Chriſt Jeſus. I beſeech you conſider this, and remember that they are the worſt of Cowards that run away from their Religion. It is tolerable, and ſometimes laudable, and even neceſſary to change in other Matters, but to be Variable and Unſteady here is the fouleſt Reproach imaginable, and nothing can be ſaid enough to diſparage and condemn ſuch a Practice.

I ſeriouſly therefore exhort you to Stedfaſtneſs in that Faith and Profeſſion which you were baptized into. It is your Happineſs to be of the True, Antient, and Apoſtolick Religion: do not relinquiſh it, do not diſguiſe it, do not diſſemble it. This latter is the Thing I am chiefly to inculcate at preſent. You are *Proteſtants:* be not aſhamed of your Name, or your Profeſſion: yea, know that it is your indiſpenſable Duty to own and acknowledge them. From *Rom.* x. 10. we learn that *confeſſing with the Mouth* is as neceſſary as *believing with the Heart.* Contrary to which was the Error of the *Priſcillianiſts* of old, mentioned by * St. *Auguſtine*, who maintained that they were not obliged to profeſs Religion in Words, for which they quoted that Text in *Pſal.* xv. 2. *Who ſpeaketh the Truth in his Heart*, miſerably perverting the Senſe of the Pſalmiſt, whoſe Meaning is that the Tongue and Heart ought to go together, that Men ſhould Speak what they Think: which is directly oppoſite to what thoſe Hereticks aſſerted. Dare then to own the Beſt Religion, and to ſtand firm and unſhaken in the Defence of it. Our Church and our Faith are *built upon a*

* Lib. cont. Mendac.

Rock;

Rock; be as Immovable as *that*. Slight, diſregard, throw off all Sollicitations and Suggeſtions that are made to you at any time of renouncing the Truth, or of looking upon it as an Indifferent Thing. Being *Reformed Proteſtants*, you are in poſſeſſion of the Primitive and Pure Religion: leave not this for one that can plead neither Antiquity nor Purity. You are in poſſeſſion of the Revealed Will of God: do not leave this for a New Syſtem of Religion which is founded on the Will and Pleaſure of Men, and hath no other Bottom than the Dictates of our Shallow Reaſoning. Be entire in your Faith, and admit not of different Mixtures in your Religion.

I will preſs this Duty on you by theſe two Conſiderations or Motives.

1. This is the *Expreſs Will of God*. I doubt not but this is the ultimate Meaning of thoſe Laws in *Lev.* xix. 19. *Thou ſhalt not let thy Cattle gender with a diverſe Kind: Thou ſhalt not ſow thy Field with mingled Seed: Neither ſhall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee*: and in *Deut.* xxii. 10. *Thou ſhalt not plow with an Ox and an Aſs together.* When God forbids theſe Heterogeneous Mixtures, he leads us, as well as the *Jews*, to ſomething higher and ſpiritual. That which we are to learn from theſe Prohibitions is this, that we ought to love Simplicity and Integrity, and that eſpecially in Religion we muſt hate all undue Mixing and Blending, all Sophiſticating and Adulterating, and we muſt Entirely and Fully devote ourſelves to God and his Service, and therein continue with ſteady Minds and unalterable Practices.

But to wave theſe more Myſtical and Tropological Texts, you cannot but be convinced of the Unlawfulneſs and Unreaſonableneſs of being Partial or Unſettled in Religion, when you urge on your Minds thoſe more poſitive and plain Commands which

which you meet with in the Bible. You are bid to *buy the Truth*, and at the ſame time forbid to *ſell it*, that is, to part with ſo excellent a Purchaſe on any Terms. St. *Paul* calls upon them to *hold faſt the Form of Sound Words*, 2 Tim. i. 13. and to *hold faſt your Profeſſion*, Heb. iv. 14. and *without wavering*, x. 33. and *not to be toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine*, Eph. iv. 14. He would have you *continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled*, Col. i. 23. The Original Words, Τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἑδραῖοι, do moſt emphatically ſet forth the Steaddineſs and Firmneſs in Religion which the Apoſtle requires, and ſo do thoſe other Expreſſions of his in *Col.* ii. 7. Ἐῤῥιζωμένοι καὶ βεβαιωμένοι ἐν τῇ πίστει, *rooted and ſtabliſhed in the Faith.* St. *Jude* alſo exhorts you to *contend earneſtly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, ver. 3. All Perſons of intelligent Minds cannot but confeſs that the Practice of theſe plain and peremptory Injunctions is inconſiſtent with the Fluctuating and Halting in Religion which the *Cripples* of our Age are ſo noted for.

2. Conſider and reflect on the *excellent Example*, the admirable *Practice of the Chriſtians in the Firſt Ages.* They were Stable and Conſtant, and of one Face and Complexion. * *In all Things*, ſaith Athenagoras, *we Chriſtians are conſiſtent with our ſelves, and we are in all Places Alike.* For though I have before mentioned ſome Inſtances of a contrary Nature, yet the Main Body of the Primitive Chriſtians were famous for their Stedfaſtneſs in their Religion. This Steady and Reſolved Temper made them to be taken notice of, and it gained them Eſteem and Repute even with their Enemies. Thoſe Antient Profeſſors of Chriſtianity and their Succeſſors were obſerved to be unalter-

* Ἀλλ' ἐσμὲν πάντα παντα χῆ ὅμοιοι καὶ ἴσοι. Legat. pro Chriſtian.

able

able in their Doctrines and Manners: they abhorred all Falſifying and Diſſembling. Their general Senſe was (as it is repreſented by one of them) that † thoſe who do not openly profeſs the Truth which they believe, as well as thoſe who believe not the Truth which they profeſs, are to be rejected by God and Men. Accordingly they publickly owned the Doctrine of JESUS, and could by no Arts and Perſuaſions be prevailed with to do the contrary. For * they were enjoined (as an other of them tells us) by the Conſtitutions of the Evangelical Law to undergo all Dangers and Hazards for the Truth, and not to betray their holy Religion out of Fear and Cowardice. When they were commanded by their Perſecutors to deny Chriſt and renounce the Faith of the Goſpel, they plainly declared (as a § third hath aſſured us) that they would die rather than do it, and they never failed to be as good as their Words. Fix your Eyes on the brave and generous Spirits of thoſe former Times, follow the Pattern of theſe excellent Chriſtians, behave yourſelves as thoſe Worthies did, and thereby you will not only conciliate the Favour of God, but purchaſe that Reſpect and Honour which thoſe Undaunted Spirits were, and are at this day rewarded with. I beſeech you, my Brethren, to weigh theſe Things, and let the ſerious Conſideration of them move you to a ſtedfaſt embracing of the True Faith, and that only.

3. Seriouſly attend to the peremptory Deciſion of our Saviour in *Matt.* vi. 24. *No Man can ſerve*

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† Tam reprobi ſunt qui verum quod credunt non loquuntur, quàm qui verum quod loquuntur non credunt. *Proſper in Pſal.*

* Τῦτο ἡμέτερα νομοθεσία κελεύει διακινδυνέυειν ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας, κ᾽ μὴ προδιδόναι δειλία τὴν ἐυσέβειαν. Greg. Naz.

§ Tertull. Apol cap. 2.

two Maſters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or elſe he will hold to the one and deſpiſe the other: ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon. The *Jewiſh* Rabbins have a Proverb to this purpoſe, § *We find no Man that is fit for two Tables*, that is in our Saviour's Language, no Man can ſerve two Maſters, engage in different and contrary Cauſes. And if that Proverbial Saying of the *Jews* was very Antient, give me leave to conjecture that St. *Paul*, who was bred up at the Feet of *Gamaliel*, and was acquainted with the Sayings of the Rabbins, alluded to it when he ſaid to the *Corinthians*, *Ye cannot drink of the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; ye cannot partake of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils*, 1 Cor. x. 21. Ye cannot communicate in the Heatheniſh Rites and Feaſts, and be worthy Gueſts at the Chriſtian Feaſts too. For as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith in an other Place, *What Fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs, and what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs, and what Concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. There is no Agreement between the True Service of God, and the Pollutions of an Idolatrous Church.

4. Think how ſhameful and ſcandalous it is, now when Chriſtianity hath gotten to its Meridian, to ſhut your Eyes againſt this Clear Light. After ſeventeen hundred Years are you not ſatisfied whether this be the True Chriſtianity which you profeſs? After an hundred and fifty Years are any of you doubting which is the Right Religion, the *Proteſtant* or *Popiſh?* What! do you continue in a State of Indifferency at this time of day? Do you queſtion the Truth and Certainty of thoſe Evangelical Doctrines, which not only your Bible,

§ Non invenimus ullum hominem qui aptus ſit ad duas menſas. *Talmud.*

but

but your Own and all Reformed Churches have commended to you? Are you unconcerned for thoſe Divine Truths which the Holy Martyrs of Jeſus ſealed with their Blood? Though this be the Unſettled Genius of many among us at this day, yet I hope better Things of you to whom I am now ſpeaking; yea, I hope there are conſiderable Numbers that are not infected with this Indifferency.

To obviate this growing Malady, and keep you fixed and ſettled in your Faith and Religion, I will leave with you theſe plain *Directions* and *Helps*.

1. Take care betimes to lay in a *Stock of Principles*: This muſt be very diligently obſerved, for the Neglect and Want of this is one of the greateſt Cauſes of the Evil that I am complaining of. To this purpoſe we are to be convinced that Sound Principles are the Foundation of all Religion; and that as it is in *Building* the laying of the *Foundation* is of the greateſt Moment and Importance, becauſe on this the whole Superſtructure depends; ſo in the Spiritual Architecture great Care muſt be taken about the Groundwork, becauſe nothing in our Chriſtianity can be ſound and ſafe without this. A True Chriſtian is he that believes the Doctrines as well as obeys the Precepts of Jeſus Chriſt, for one is as abſolutely neceſſary as the other. Wherefore let us acquaint ourſelves with all the Subſtantial Articles of our Faith, all the Fundamentals of our Religion, for hereby we ſhall be preſerved from the Indifferency and Defection of theſe days. The Tree that is not well Rooted will Totter and Shake. When Men are at firſt intoxicated with Falſe Notions, they muſt needs Reel and Stagger. It is no wonder that you ſee them *carried about* with every Wind, when they want *Ballaſt*, wherewith their Veſſels ſhould be Poiſed and made to ſail Steadily. Hence it is that they are hurried back-

backwards and forwards with every impetuous Blaſt, and are miſerably ſhipwrecked and caſt away. Endeavour therefore to attain to Fixed Notices of Things in Religion, to be well rooted and grounded in the True Faith, to underſtand your Religion throughly, and to know the True Reaſons and Grounds of your embracing it; to be converſant in the Sacred Writings, I mean the Bible, the Great Treaſury and Magazine of Divine Truths. Then you will ſtand firm, and nothing will be able to ſhake or diſturb your Faith, and you will be diligent and zealous in aſſerting it.

2. Be continually *Praying* for the Divine Aſſiſtance, beg of Heaven to uphold you, to fix and eſtabliſh you. Man is a Floating Creature of himſelf; he being compoſed of diſcordant Principles, is naturally inclined to be Uncertain and Fickle. It is Grace only that can ſettle and confirm him, and this he ought to implore of God with great Earneſtneſs. He is concerned to pray that the natural Levity of his Mind, the Deſultorineſs of his Spirit may be removed, and that he may be Conſtant and of One Piece; that he may ſhun all Nauſeous Lukewarmneſs, that his Light may ſhine before Men in an open and viſible Profeſſion of Religion, and that the Dread of Man may not dim this Light, nor cauſe it to withdraw its Rays: and laſtly, he is earneſtly to pray for the Arrival of that happy Day (which we hope is not very far off) which ſhall put a Period to all theſe Changings and Shiftings, all our Contentions and Diſtractions in Religious Matters.

3. Avoid or reſiſt thoſe *Temptations* which you ſee have this unhappy Effect upon Men, namely, to draw them from their former Profeſſion, and to make them Indifferent in their Religion. King *Saul*, and King *Solomon*, King *Amaſiah* and King *Joaſh* were Inſtances of this; *Conſtantine* the Great towards

towards his End favoured the *Arians*. The Views of Secular Intereſt, the Offers of Worldly Profit and Advancement, but eſpecially the actual Fruition of theſe are wont to do this. The being ſet in High Places makes ſome Mens Heads turn round, they become Giddy and Unſtable. The fair Gale of Applauſe which blows ſo briskly on them, turns them to any Point. In a Word, *the Love of this preſent World* makes them, with *Demas*, *forſake the Truth*, and thoſe that adhere to it, and betake themſelves to any Side or Party. Therefore be ſure to fortify yourſelves againſt theſe Enticements: Eſpecially at this Time this Advice is ſeaſonable, when this *Indifferency* which I have been ſpeaking of is confirmed every day by ſo many plain Inſtances. The Head of that Principality in *Germany* which firſt threw off *Popery*, and entertained the *Proteſtant Religion*, hath now embraced the former and abandoned the latter for a Crown, which yet he cannot keep. More lately the Proteſtant Parents of a Noble Family have conſented to their Daughter's changing her Religion, to make her capable of marrying a Sovereign. Can we not produce a Nearer Inſtance, I mean at home, of a Crowned Head who had writ againſt *Popery*, but began about the latter end of his Reign to attempt a Reconciliation with *Rome*, and actually ſuſpended the Execution of the Penal Laws againſt Papiſts, and ſhewed Favour to them, yea and ſhewed himſelf well affected to the *Roman* Religion itſelf in the Articles of Marriage between the Prince his Son and the *Spaniſh* Infanta. *Rome* doth ſo intoxicate and enchant the World with the Cup of her Abominations, that ſhe apparently gets ground of late, and the Proteſtant Religion is decaying in many Places, and ſeems to be even upon its laſt Legs.

Among ourſelves is it not become modiſh to ſhift our Poſtures, and to ſwap our old Doctrines for new ones, though our Church hath been in poſſeſſion of them ever ſince King *Edward* VI. Many of us are filing off apace towards New Schemes of Divinity, and we are even frighted out of the Truth by the Name of *Calviniſm*, tho' it is no other than what hath been owned and defended by our Archbiſhops and Biſhops, by our Convocations, by our Univerſities and the Learned Profeſſors therein, and by the whole Body of the Clergy. But there muſt needs be this Alteration, when Doctrines of Religion are ſhaped according to Intereſt or Faſhion, or any other worldly and ſiniſter Motives. And when it is thus, we cannot expect that Men ſhould be ſteady in their Religion, but rather that they ſhould tamely deſert it. But I beſeech you be not You of that Number, do not cowardly flinch from the Truth, notwithſtanding any Hazards and Difficulties you encounter with for its ſake.

Having thus guarded yourſelves, let me remind you to Pity and lament the Indifferency and Wavering of *Others*, and to lay it to heart. I ſpeak this becauſe I find that Men at this day are generally Unconcerned at this, and hear it with Indifferency. It is grown into a common Perſuaſion that there is no *great Harm* (if there be any at all) in changing of Opinions and Doctrines: but I hope I have convinced you of this Errour by what I have before offered to you; and therefore now I call upon you to be *Senſible* of it, and to endeavour to make *Others* ſo too. And this you muſt do by exhorting them to ſhew a becoming Zeal and Ardour for the Truth, and by your own ſevere Reproving and Rebuking the Giddy Genius of the Times. When *Peter* ſhamefully Judaized, his Brother Apoſtle *reſiſted him to the Face*. Do

ye

ye the like; couragiouſly withſtand the Temporizers of this Generation, oppoſe and bear up againſt the Gallio's of this Age: Never ſuffer them to go on without your ſevereſt Frowns, ſharpeſt Reprimands, and utmoſt Reſiſtance. And when you have done this, continue to be very ſevere to yourſelves: never favour that in your own Practice, which you check in others.

Indeed in ſome Things you ought to ſhew great *Moderation*, to hold an *Indifferency*, namely, in thoſe Things which are of an Indifferent Nature, or which are doubtful and diſputable. Here you muſt always be charitable to thoſe that are not of your Perſuaſion. Cenſure not any one for Things of this kind. But in Matters of an higher Nature, that is, ſuch as are Neceſſary and Eſſential to Chriſtianity, and without which Eternal Salvation is not to be attained, you muſt ſhew no Indifference and Coldneſs. You muſt not dally with the indiſpenſable Truths of the Goſpel, you muſt not conceal or diſguiſe any Fundamental Point of Faith. Away with ſuch Mummers and Maskers in Religion. Be Open, Reſolute and Unſhaken in the Grand Doctrines of the Goſpel. Stand ſtedfaſt in the Old Way of Chriſtianity, in the Beaten Path which Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, Confeſſors and Martyrs, and all faithful Chriſtians have walked in: and particularly continue conſtant in the Old Faith and Doctrine which were reeſtabliſhed at the Reformation, and reject all Upſtart ones. We ſhall never come to any Settlement in our Religion, 'till we do this in good earneſt. Be not timorous and faint-hearted: take all juſt occaſions to aſſert and maintain the Truth. Speak plain, and do not ſtammer: be not afraid to utter the real Senſe of your Hearts, leſt you be found falſe to God and your own Conſciences; remembering what was ſaid by our Saviour, *Mat.* xii. 30.

He that is not with me is againſt me: where we ſee he reckons thoſe to be *againſt him*, that is, to be his Enemies, who are not directly and plainly his Friends, who do not ſincerely adhere to him and his Cauſe. Be not aſhamed then to own our Saviour and his Cauſe in a Degenerate and Backſliding Age.

To conclude, having ſolemnly eſpouſed the *Chriſtian* and *Reformed Religion*, reſolve to be never Divorced from it, nor to take any Other into your Embraces.



SER-

SERMON II.

CHRIST, a Christian's Life;

AND

DEATH, His Gain.

PHIL. i. 21.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

THE great Master of the Apostle's Hope and Prayer (as you may read in the foregoing Verse) was, that he might be alway and in every thing magnified in his Body, that is, by him (as it is in Hebrew, and the Body is put for the whole consisting of Body and Soul) that by his Actions and Sufferings and Ministry Christ might be glorified, whether it were by Life, or by Death, that is, by his continuing to Preach if he lived, and by glorifying God by his Death if he were called hence. Thus it is with every good Christian, the Rays in the World, be wholly devoted to Christ: or if he be taken hence, this will redound to his unspeakable Advantage and Happiness, for to him to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

I begin with the first Clause of the Apostle's Words, To me to live is Christ, and so in proportion it may be said, To every Christian, to every holy Man To live, is Christ. This is the first Proposition that the Words afford, and I will enlarge upon it by explaining it to you in three Particulars.

PHIL. i. 21.

For to me to live is Chriſt, and to die is Gain.

THE great Matter of the Apoſtle's Hope and Prayer (as you may read in the foregoing Verſe) was that he might *not be aſhamed of the Goſpel*, that he might *with all Boldneſs* preach it to the World, and that Chriſt might *be magnified in his Body.* that is, by him, (for it is an Hebraiſm, and the *Body* is put for the *Perſon*, conſiſting of Body and Soul) that by his Undertakings and Miniſtry Chriſt might be advanced, *whether it were by Life, or by Death*, that is, by his continuing to Preach if he lived, and by glorifying God by his Death if he were called hence. Thus it is with every good Chriſtian; if he ſtays in the World, he wholly devotes his Life to Chriſt: or if he be taken hence, this will redound to his unſpeakable Advantage and Happineſs, *for to him to live is Chriſt, and to die is Gain.*

I begin with the firſt Clauſe of the Apoſtle's Words, *To me to live is Chriſt:* and ſo in proportion it may be ſaid, To every Chriſtian, to every holy Man To live, is Chriſt. This is the firſt Propoſition that the Words afford, and I will enlarge upon it by explaining it to you in theſe three Particulars.

1. To every good and holy Man *to live is Chriſt*, that is, Chriſt is the *Principle* of his Life. Yea, he may deſervedly be ſaid to be his Life. Thence the Apoſtle thus expreſſes himſelf, *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God*, *Gal.* ii. 20. No carnal and ſenſual Perſon, no Man in whom the Animal Life predominates can ſay this; yea, he hath no Senſe and Underſtanding of this, that *Chriſt is his Life.* This is one grand and eſſential Difference between the Life of a Regenerate and Unregenerate Man. As it is by the *Soul* that a Man lives the *Natural Life*, that his Body (which is in itſelf a dull and unactive Lump of Earth) is endowed with Senſe and Motion; and as it is by the *Union* of the Body and Soul that this vital Energy diſplays itſelf; ſo in the *Spiritual* and *Divine Life* Chriſt is the Radical and Vital Source of it in all Believers, and 'tis by their being United unto Chriſt that they exert the Spiritual Operations of Life. In Him they live and move and have their Spiritual Being. In every Action of their Lives they feel the Reality of this, becauſe they are continnally drawing Vertue from him, and they cannot live and ſubſiſt without him. Thus for a Believer *to live, is Chriſt.*

2. There is this Meaning likewiſe of the Words, that it is the whole *Employment* and *Life* of a Regenerate Perſon to ſerve and pleaſe Chriſt. For he conſiders that *he is bought with a Price*, even with the Precious Blood of Chriſt, and therefore *he is not his own*, he is Chriſt's, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20. and (as it follows in that Place) he *is to glorify God in his Body and in his Spirit, which are God's.* A godly Man doth not think he *lives* unleſs he wholly reſigns himſelf, both Soul and Body, unto Chriſt his Maſter, and is altogether at his Command and Diſpoſal. Whereas an Unregenerate Man makes

it his great Buſineſs to gratify his Luſt and licentious Deſires, to pleaſe his carnal Appetite and corrupt Nature, to ſerve Satan and do him Homage and Fealty; the renewed Perſon, on the contrary, makes it the Work of his whole Life to conform himſelf to the Will and Pleaſure of Chriſt, he ſtudies in all things to live to God, to live to his Lord and Redeemer. This is what the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* xiv. 7, 8. *None of us* that are Believers *liveth to himſelf, but liveth unto the Lord.* And the Reaſon of this is given in 2 *Cor.* v. 15. *Chriſt died, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him who died for them.* On Chriſt's dying for us is grounded the Equitableneſs of our ſpending our whole Lives in his Service, of our Conſecrating our ſelves to Him, and conſequently of our not Alienating our ſelves by any wicked Practices.

3. There is this farther Meaning, that the *Deſign* and *Scope* of a godly Man's Life is to Glorify Chriſt in the World. This is an other great Diſcrimination between the ſanctified Generation of Men, and thoſe that are of the wicked Race of Mankind. Theſe latter propound no other *End* to themſelves than the Fruition of their ſenſual Pleaſures, or worldly Profits, or Honours. This is the grand Deſign of their Lives, yea, this is their Life: and their conſtant Cry is, (with thoſe whom the Pſalmiſt mentions) *who will ſhew us any Good?* that is, any Temporal or Earthly Good: for the purchaſing of this is our ſole Aim and End. But a Good Man conſidering that he had his Being given him to glorify God in the World, and to advance the Honour of his Redeemer, thinks it reaſonable that he ſhould live to this excellent End and Purpoſe, and proſecute this in his Thoughts, Deſires and Wiſhes, in his Words and Speeches; in his Prayers, Supplications, and Thankſgivings, and in all

all other Exerciſes of Devotion, in all the Enterprizes and Actions of his Life, and even in the Uſe of all the good Things of this World, for 'tis fitting that Chriſt ſhould be glorified in theſe, ſince from him we have the comfortable Enjoyment of them. It is moſt congruous and reaſonable that if we own Chriſt to be our Lord, we ſhould in every thing deſign his Honour, that *whether we eat or drink* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *or whatever we do*, we ſhould *do it to his Glory*. This is the Senſe of the Apoſtle's Words here in the Text: So that it is likely that they gave Occaſion for that Excellent Motto of the Emperor *Jovinian*, *The Scope of my Life is Chriſt*, he is the Chief End of all my Actions. Thus to us *to live*, ſhould *be Chriſt*.

From this Part of the Text thus explain'd I draw theſe two *Inferences*, 1. See here *what it is to Live*. 2. *Make it your Buſineſs* to Live thus. Firſt, I ſay, we may gather from the Premiſſes what it is to *Live*: we may have right Apprehenſions concerning the true Notion of *Living*. Men are mightily miſtaken about this, they think that to number ſo many Days and Years that they have been in the World, is to Live: but they are to know that this is a mean contracted Notion of *Living*. Such Men do not Live, but only paſs on from one Day to another. When you have asked them how long they have lived, they may truly anſwer, We have not lived at all, but we have been a great while in the World, we have taken up a Place there, and filled up a Room: we have ſpent our Hours, and paſs'd away the Time, but it is improper to ſay we have lived. It was truly pronounced by one that diſcourſed on no higher Principles than thoſe of Natural Reaſon*, That it is but a very ſmall Pittance of our Life that we may be ſaid to Live.

* Exigua pars vitæ eſt quam nos vivimus. Sen. de Brev. vitæ.

For

For all that Time that is ſquandered away in Idleneſs and doing Nothing, or doing that which is Impertinent and nothing to the Purpoſe, can't be called Living, tho' the Perſons all the Time enjoy Health and all the Pleaſures and Advantages of this Life in great Plenty and Abundance. Much leſs can thoſe Men be ſaid to Live that ſpend their Days wholly in indulging their Luſts and carnal Deſires.

And yet ſome have ſuch poor Repreſentations and Conceptions of *Living* that they call this ſo, as he that choſe this for his Epitaph, *Friends, let us live while we live:* that is, whilſt we are here, let us deny our ſelves none of the Sweets of this World, let us glut our ſelves with all the Delicacies that this ſenſual Life affords us, for then we ſhall be ſaid to *Live.* Many are ſo ſottiſh as to think that if they eat and drink well they are Good Livers: and ſo they are indeed if we have Regard to their Bodies only, and take no Notice of their other Part; that is, if we look upon them as Beaſts, not as Men; for mere Eating and Drinking is the Life of a Brute: and he that calls himſelf Man, and yet makes this his Principal Good and Happineſs, leads a Beſtial Life only, and not that of a Man, that is, of a Rational and Heaven-born Creature.

And if he doth not Live in this latter Senſe, he is *Dead* in the Accounts of all Wiſe and Conſiderate Perſons. It hath been obſerved by ſome, that in the Computations in the Bible the Number of thoſe Years of a King that were ſpent in *Evil Governing* is omitted, and not taken Notice of at all, as in the Account that is given of the Time that *Saul* and *Solomon* reigned. Whether this be the right way of ſolving this *Omiſſion*, I ſhall not here debate; but this is certain that the Years of wicked Mens Lives are not to be reckoned, for they (to ſpeak ſtrictly) do not Live, but are Dead.

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So ſaith the Holy Scripture concerning the Voluptuous Widow, *She is dead while ſhe lives*, 1 Tim. v. 6. This muſt needs be ſo according to that Account which I ſet before you of the Life of a Chriſtian: he is ſaid to Live becauſe he entirely depends on Chriſt, and derives Virtue from him; becauſe he ſpends his whole Life (after he is converted, and throughly brought to a Senſe of his Duty by the effectual Operation of the Holy Spirit) in the Service of his Maker and Redeemer, and becauſe he makes it the principal End and Deſign of his Life to advance their Glory and Honour. This is *truly Living*, and it is *Chriſtianity* alone that teaches us this. A True Chriſtian *lives*, when others only breathe and have a Being. In a word, many *are* in the World, but few *live*; for according to our Apoſtle, *To him* (and ſo conſequently to others) *to live, is Chriſt.*

Secondly, Make it your buſineſs to Live thus. Indeed this Exhortation chiefly concerns the *Miniſters of the Goſpel*, ſuch as are Guides and Inſtructors of others, for St. *Paul* who ſpeaks in my Text was ſuch a one; *To me* (ſaith he) *to live is Chriſt*, to me as I am a Preacher of the Goſpel, to me as I have the Conduct of Mens Souls, and as I make it my great Care to pleaſe him who ſent me into the Miniſtry. And this ought to be the Language and Practice of all the Diſpenſers of God's holy Word: they are *Embaſſadors* of Chriſt, and therefore as thoſe that have that Character act for their Maſter's Honour and Intereſt, ſo theſe muſt be careful to do the ſame. An Evangelical Miniſter ſhould aim at Chriſt's Glory by endeavouring to convert many Souls, for nothing more tends to the Glory of our Lord.

But this Text and the Doctrine that I have inſiſted on from it concerns you All. It is the Duty not only of Miniſters, but of every Private Chriſtian,

Chriſtian, to make Chriſt his Life; for St. *Paul* ſpeaks theſe Words not only as he is an Apoſtle and a Miniſter of Chriſt, but in general as he is a Member of Chriſt. Every Man that hath taken upon him the Chriſtian Religion is to live ſo as that he may truly ſay, *To me to live is Chriſt.* The Principle of Life whereby I live is Chriſt; I make it the great Buſineſs of my Life to pleaſe and ſerve him, and to bring Glory to his Name. This is True Living, this is Living to purpoſe; and unleſs a Man do this, he lives in vain. Permit me on this occaſion to mention what I have read in the Life of a Great Man, the famous *Tycho Brahe*: his common and daily Expreſſion was, when he was undertaking any conſiderable Thing in his Faculty, *That I may not ſeem to have lived in vain.* Which ſerious Conſideration and Reflection excited him to addict himſelf to his Studies, and to find out that which was moſt uſeful in that Profeſſion of which he was a great Maſter. This very Thought ſhould be as prevalent in *Religion* and the Matters that concern it, and ſhould puſh us on to great and generous Enterpriſes; that we *may not live in vain*, that it may appear that we have not been in the World to no purpoſe, but that we may properly be ſaid to *Live.* This is then only when we live to Chriſt, when we make his Laws the Rule of our Actions, and his Glory our End, This is Living indeed: I beſeech you therefore mind this in the firſt Place; whatever you neglect, be not forgetful of This: And then, if you thus Live, your Death will certainly be Gain to you. Which brings me to the

Second Propoſition, namely, that Death to a Perſon that makes Chriſt the Principle and End of Life, is clear Gain. Or thus more briefly, To a godly Man Death is gainful. Which I will demonſtrate to you in theſe five Particulars: Firſt,

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it is Gainful to him becauſe thereby he is freed from *Sin*; not only his own, but thoſe of others: Secondly, from all Temptations to Sin: Thirdly, from his Doubts and Fears which are Attendants of this preſent ſinful State: Fourthly, from all Calamities and Sufferings: Fifthly, he is put into poſſeſſion of all that can make him happy.

1. A godly Man by dying is freed from the Contagion and Defilement of his own Sins, and is put into a State of perfect Holineſs. The beſt Chriſtians, whilſt they are on this Side of Heaven, complain of the Badneſs of their Hearts, and the Diſorders of their Lives, which is a conſtant Grievance to them. *Whilſt they are in this Tabernacle, they groan, being burdened,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* v. 4. The Load of Sin which they labour under fetches deep Sighs and Groans from them. They have a continual Conflict within themſelves: the Animal and Senſual Part is always combating with that which is Spiritual and Divine, which the Apoſtle expreſſes thus, *Gal.* v. 17. *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh; and theſe are contrary one to the other, ſo that ye cannot do the Things that ye would.* But holy Men by Death are happily releaſed from this Afflictive Duel, they ſin no more, they never more offend their Gracious Maker and Redeemer. When a holy Man dies, he is tranſlated to the Spirits of *Juſt Men made Perfect*, he enters into a ſinleſs and compleat State of Life, and is wholly and entirely conformed to the divine Will.

And as they are freed from their *Own Sins*, ſo likewiſe from thoſe of *Other Men.* Whileſt they are in the World, how often are their Ears grated with Curſes and Oaths, and all manner of profane and impious Language? What do they behold but Contentions and Diviſions, and Breach of Charity, what but Pride, Oſtentation and Ambition? what but

but Covetouſneſs and Senſuality? what but Wantonneſs and Lewdneſs? what but Intemperance and Luxury? what but Deceit and Fraud? what but Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation, and a Counterfeit Shew of Religion? what but Superſtition in ſome, and Atheiſm in others? and in a word, all kind of Wickedneſs and Impiety? This muſt needs diſturb the Thoughts and grieve the Heart of a Good Man; he cannot but be greatly troubled at this Horrid Scene of Things. He, like righteous *Lot* of old, is vexed with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked: he is filled with Sorrow becauſe the World is ſo addicted to Vice, and will not liſten to Reproof and Reaſon. The mad and frantick Laughter of the World fetches Tears from his Eyes. He weeps in ſecret for the Abominations which are ſo openly committed. But Death is his good Friend, and wipes all Tears from his Eyes, by taking him from the corrupt Herd of Men, and placing him in the Society of pure and ſpotleſs Spirits, of glorified Saints and Angels. This is unſpeakable *Gain*.

2. In the next place, he is freed by Death not only from Sin and Sinful Men, but from all *Temptations to Sin*. In this World there are very powerful Sollicitations to the commiſſion of Evil, very prevalent Suggeſtious to all that is vitious and unlawful. We can ſtep no where but we ſee ourſelves beſet with Snares and environed with Dangers. Satan the Prince of Darkneſs beleaguers us very ſtraitly: he uſes all his Devices and Methods, his Arts and Stratagems to ſeduce us. And at the ſame time the alluring World encircles us, and ſtrives to deſtroy us with its Charms. Objects of Sin and Vanity encompaſs us on every ſide, and we are no where ſafe and ſecure. Now, it is by Death that we are freed from theſe dangerous Baits and Inveiglements. In Heaven there is no malicious

Spirit

Spirit to ſuggeſt and inſinuate what is vitious, and there we are got clear of this enticing World, and are above the Sphere of its Activity, out of the Reach of all its Magick and Enchantments. In ſhort, a Godly Man, who hath reached the Heavenly Habitations, and left this Sinful World behind him, is delivered from all Temptation, and from all his Spiritual Enemies, and on this account he is a great Gainer.

3. And moreover, he is rid of his *Doubts* and *Fears*, his *Perplexities* and *Diſquietudes* which he laboured under in this Life. For it is the Condition and Allotment of the Servants of God in this World to be under a Cloud very often, to be diſturbed and perplexed in Mind. The Reaſon of which is this, they are Suſpicious of themſelves, and entertain a holy Jealouſy in their Hearts; whence it is that they oftentimes queſtion the Truth of their Graces, and doubt of the Favour of God; and tho' with great Sincerity they *work out their Salvation*, yet they do it *with Fear and Trembling:* they are frequently dejected and diſmayed, and go to Heaven as it were by the Confines of Hell. But Death diſperſes all their Clouds, and brings Light and Day with it. Whereas before they were Unſettled and Unquiet, now they are Fixed. The Ark which was Toſſed, now Reſteth, and ſhall ſo for ever. This greateſt of all Bleſſings is procured them by Death, for then and not 'till then they may uſe the Pſalmiſt's Language, *Return unto thy Reſt, O my Soul.* When Mortality is ſwallowed up of Life, then all the former Fears and Miſgivings of holy Men vaniſh and ceaſe for ever: perfect Peace and Serenity fill their Minds, and they are entirely poſſeſſed of the Favour and Love of God, and to eternal Ages live in the full Fruition of them. Thus it is evident that to a Righteous Man, Death is *Gain.*

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4. I proceed to evince this yet further, by ſhewing that he is freed from the *Outward Diſtreſſes, Calamities, and Sufferings* which in this Life he is obnoxious to, as well as to Sin and Vice, which I ſpoke of before. This can be only done by his being taken hence; for as long as he is here, he is neceſſarily liable to bodily Afflictions, to outward Troubles and Grievances. Yea, this Place was made for theſe, *Job* v. 7. *Man is born unto trouble.* It is his Heritage here, and it is entailed upon him, and he cannot be put by it. Bodily Infirmities, Diſeaſes, Pains, Poverty, Diſgrace, Violence, Robbery, Wars, Fire, Loſſes, and Diſappointments of all kinds, private and publick, perſonal and National, are the Companions, more or leſs, of this Mortal State. Yea, and our Plenty and Abundance are ſometimes troubleſome to us, as well as our Wants. Moreover, it happens frequently that Good Men diſturb and incommode *one an other*. *Abraham* and *Lot* began to be ruffled, and to diſreliſh each other. *Paul* and *Barnabas* had their Paroxyſms, their fits of Paſſion and unbecoming Demeanour. Good Men are ſometimes at Variance, and even when they are United to God, they are ſeen to ſeparate from one an other. They differ in their Judgements, and are apt to interpret one an other's Words and Actions in the worſt Senſe, and thence ſpring up Jealouſies and Debates, Contentions and Diviſions.

And if they ſuffer from *one an other*, it is no wonder that they are ill treated by thoſe that are profeſſedly *wicked*, and bear an implacable Enmity againſt all that is Vertuous and Good. Our Lord Chriſt himſelf, his Apoſtles, and the Bleſſed Martyrs in the Primitive Times had Experience of this hard Uſage: and ever ſince that time great Numbers of the true Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Religion have met with Affronts, Reproaches, Injuries, Op-

preſſion and Perſecution. Thus which way ſoever you look, you ſee that Croſſes and Calamities, Troubles and Diſtreſſes are the Allotment of this Life. And there is no Way to be freed from them but by Death. This is one of the Reaſons given why thoſe that *die in the Lord* are pronounced *Bleſſed*, namely, becauſe *they reſt from their Labours*, Rev. xiv. 13. they are immediately releaſed from all their Afflictions and Miſeries.

Fifthly and laſtly, they are put into the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of all that can make them Happy. As the Grave is a ſafe Cuſtody, a place of Refuge for their Bodies (for *there the weary be at reſt*, as *Job* ſpeaks, Chap. iii. Verſe 17. there they are ſafely lodged, and find a Shelter from approaching Calamities) : So the Heavenly Manſions are the Sanctuary and ſecure Receptacle for their Souls. As *they ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more ; neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat*, Rev. vii. 16. that is, they ſhall not be hurt with any Sort of Calamity : So they ſhall be in the actual Fruition of all that is good, comfortable, and delightful. As there is an End of their Differences and Diſputes ; ſo they are bleſſed with a perpetual Unity and Concord : for Heaven is the Place where all Agree, and where there is a perfect Harmony. As they are *taken away* from the preſent Evil, and *from the Evil to come* ; ſo *they enter into peace*, and are at perfect eaſe, and are filled with Joy and Delight, and are poſſeſſed of never-failing Glory and Bleſſedneſs. Thus if you conſider what the Godly are freed from by Death, and what they are put into Poſſeſſion of ; if you conſider that they are not only reſcued from the unwelcome Evils that attend this Mortal State, but are Partakers of all the Happineſs they can deſire ; that they not only ceaſe from their weary Pilgrimage, but are arrived at their Country,

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the New Jeruſalem, the City of the Great King; you cannot but conclude that Death is abſolute *Gain* to them, and you will give your Suffrage to what the Wiſe Man ſaith, *The Day of a Man's Death* (that is, the Death of a Believer and Holy Man) *is better than the Day of his Birth.*

Are theſe Things ſo! then let me leave with you theſe following *Inferences*, and requeſt you to weigh them with all Seriouſneſs and Application of Mind, and to behave yourſelves according to the Import of them.

1. See here the Miſerable Condition of a wicked Man when he dies. For if Death be *Gain* to the Godly, then it neceſſarily follows that the ungodly are great *Loſers* by Death: for they are not only deprived of their Lives, and with them of their unlawful Pleaſures and Profits, and their diſſolute Companions, all which are dearer to them than their Lives; but they for ever loſe the hopes of being Happy: for Death to them is a paſſage to endleſs and Eternal Miſery. Wherefore it was rightly ſaid by Holy *Job*, *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite when God taketh away his Soul!* Ch. xxvii. Ver. 8. That is, he is in a moſt Deſperate Condition when he comes to leave the World, and no Tongue can expreſs the Horrour of it. The very Moraliſts of old could ſay, * "Death muſt needs be "Terrible to thoſe who with their Life loſe all other "things, &c." But the Scriptures further inform us that beſides their Loſs, there is a poſitive Puniſhment and Torment which they muſt undergo, and that without any Intermiſſion or any Period. It is no wonder that Wicked Men, who have any Apprehenſions of this Truth, are loth to take their leave of this World; it is no wonder that they tremble

* Mors enim terribilis eſt his, quorum cum vitâ omnia extinguuntur. *Cic. Paradox.*

at the Thoughts of Death. *Lewis* XI, King of *France*, as † One tells us who belonged to his Court, and had eaſy Acceſs to him, was ſo afraid of *Death*, that he commanded all his Servants all his life time not to mention that Dreadful Word *Death*.

Though it is but a Single Syllable, yet it carries Multiplied Terrours with it. And though the Mere Name may not be ſo dreaded by other Men of vitious Lives, yet it is certain that the Thing itſelf is very unwelcome and unpleaſant to them, and there is nothing they are ſo Averſe to as that. The Conſciouſneſs of their wicked Actions unrepented of makes them unwilling to look on that Ghaſtly Sight, makes them afraid to lie down in that Duſt from whence they muſt riſe to everlaſting Pains and Torments. They are ſenſible of this great Truth, that the Laſt Day of a Wicked Man is his Worſt, that his End and Cloſe are Tragical; whereas that of a Good Man is the Beſt: *the End of that Man is Peace.* Which leads me to my

2d Inference, which concerns thoſe of you who have made Chriſt your Life. Seeing you have been enabled by the Special Grace and Aſſiſtance of God thus to Live; ſeeing the Sting of Death is taken away by Chriſt Jeſus, who ſuffered Death to that very End and Purpoſe; let me exhort you to baniſh the Fear of Death, and to long for that Day of Redemption from Sin and Suffering, which is deſervedly called *Gain* in the Text. The Conſideration of the Vaſt Advantages that accrue by Death ſhould beget in you a *deſire to depart*, and thereby *to be with Chriſt.* We are aſſured by an Inſpired Inſtructor that *the Righteous hath hope in his death*, Prov. xiv. 32. Which is the perfect

† De Commines.

Reverſe of the Wicked Man's laſt State, who (as we have heard) hath *no Hope when God taketh away his Soul.* But a Godly Man dies with the comfortable Expectation of the happy Conſequences of ſleeping in Jeſus, which I have particularly ſet before you. He is willing to embrace Death, which he knows will bring him to his deſired Haven, and put a Period to all his Perils and Shipwracks, and ſuperſede all the Evils of Sin and Suffering. There is no Reſt here below, but Death conducts us to our everlaſting Reſt and Quiet. * "What the Vulgar call Death is the beginning of "Immortality, and the Birth-day to a future Life". If theſe be the expreſs Words of a *Pagan* (as indeed they are), ſhall not *Chriſtians*, ſhall not *Believers* entertain a good Opinion of Death, and be firmly perſuaded that it is the Entrance into a Bleſſed Immortality! Seeing this Bleſſedneſs cannot be attained to but by dying, ſhall we not be content to ſubmit to this Happy Fate? Shall we not long to arrive at our Port, where we ſhall be free from Rocks and Shelves, from Storms and Tempeſts, from all the Hazards of a Troubleſome and Sinful World, and enter into the State of Eternal Safety and Repoſe? This may engage every Good Man to wiſh for his final Exit, or at leaſt to be willing to entertain it, for it is for his *Gain* and *Advantage.*

3dly. Comfort your ſelves at the Death of your Friends and Relations by remembering this, that if they be of the Number of the Godly, they are Great *Gainers.* To this purpoſe recollect what I have ſaid: go over the Particulars before inſiſted upon. Know that your Friends are now freed from the Burden of the Fleſh, and conſequently

* Οὐ γὰρ καλοῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ θάνατον, αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἀθανατίας ἀρχὴν, καὶ γένεσις μέλλοντος βίου. Max. Tyr. Diſſertat. 25.

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from all Sin. Nor are they any longer vexed and diſturbed with the Vitious Demeanour of others. And being got free from the World, they are out of the Reach of Temptations. Beſides, all their Fears and Perplexities about their Eternal State, and their Intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus are at an end. And moreover, Death hath ſet them free from all Outward Troubles, Diſtreſſes, and Croſſes of this Life. Death is their good Phyſician, and hath cured them of all their Diſeaſes, Sickneſſes, and Pains; and, in a Word, hath delivered them from all the bodily Evils that they were incident to in this Vale of Tears, and it hath given them poſſeſſion of an Immortal Life, an endleſs State of Happineſs in the higheſt Heavens. So that to lament their Condition in an exceſſive manner, is a Sign that we *envy* their Happineſs, that we are diſpleaſed that they are Bleſſed. We ſhould rather Rejoice than effeminately Condole on this occaſion. It was excellently ſaid by St. *Jerom* to *Euſtochium* concerning her Mother *Paula**, "We mourn not "as if we had loſt ſuch a Perſon, but we thank "God that we *had*, yea, that we ſtill *have* ſuch a "one": for thoſe of this Character are not loſt, but ſafely lodged in Heaven, where they are free from all Miſery, and all Tears are wiped away from their Eyes. Why then ſhould not we wipe away Tears from *ours?*

4thly and Laſtly, Forget not to join both the Parts of the Text together. *To die is Gain*, ſaith the Apoſtle, but this follows upon the other Clauſe, *To me to live is Chriſt.* Mark the Dependance, and make this uſe of it, namely, to take care to make Chriſt your Life, that you may find Death to be Gainful to you. Fix it always in your Minds

* Non mœremus quòd talem amiſimus, ſed gratias agimus quòd talem habuimus, imò habemus.

that

that you are now in a State of Tryal, you are Probationers for Eternity; therefore *this*, *this* is your time of Working: afterwards you ſhall receive your Wages. Be fully convinced that none ſhall *ſit down* with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the bleſſed Patriarchs and Apoſtles in the Kingdom of Heaven, but ſuch as *Labour* here: and then Reſt will be welcome indeed to them. Obſerve the Apoſtle's Words, *Let us labour to enter into that Reſt*, Heb. iv. 11. Let us be very *ſollicitous*, *careful*, and *diligent* (as the Word in this Place ſignifies), and this will put us upon Action: let us in good earneſt employ ourſelves in that Work which God hath ſet us in this Life.

I would ask you this, How can thoſe that die in the Lord *reſt from their labours*, if they never laboured at all? Wherefore let us, as we deſire to die in the Lord, and to depart in his Favour, betake our ſelves to that Labour and Service which God requires of us in this World. Not only a lively Faith and Stedfaſt Affiance in Chriſt Jeſus, but a ready and chearful Compliance with his Commands is abſolutely neceſſary in order to Life and Salvation. God hath deſigned his Servants to a State of Bliſs and Happineſs after this Life, but they can never arrive to it without diſcharging the ſeveral Duties which are incumbent on them. O that you who hear me this day would ſeriouſly lay this to heart, and now, *whileſt it is called to day*, reflect on the Sins of your paſt Lives with godly Sorrow and Remorſe, and earneſtly beg Pardon and Mercy through Jeſus Chriſt, and implore the Divine Grace to enable you effectually to mind thoſe Things which belong to your everlaſting Peace and Welfare. From this day, yea, from this very Hour date your Reſolutions of Living like thoſe that believe an other World; thoſe that

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are fully perſuaded that Sincere Godlineſs is indiſpenſably requiſite to a Happy Eternity. You muſt make Religion the Buſineſs of your Life, or otherwiſe you will have no Advantage of it at Death: For (as I have ſaid) you muſt take the Apoſtle's Words together, and not ſeparately: unleſs you can ſay in truth and ſincerity, *To me to live is Chriſt*, you will not be able to add the next Clauſe, *To me to die is Gain.*

F I N I S.